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CHRISTMAS ISSUE





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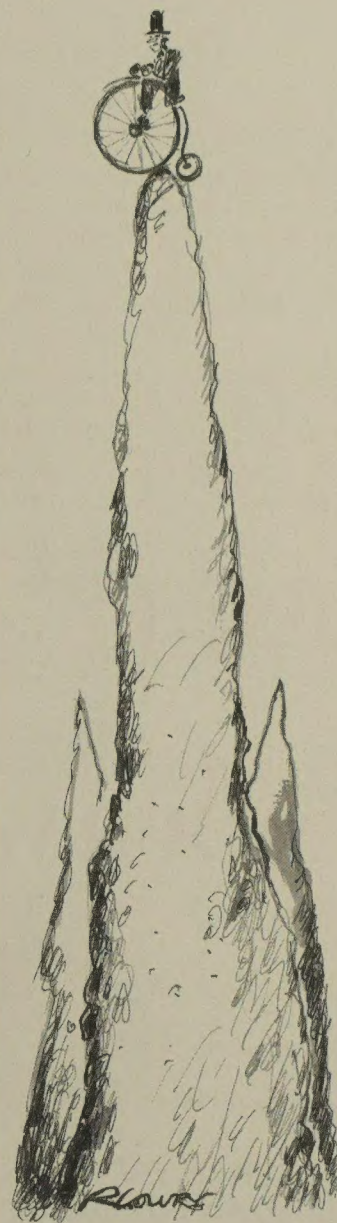
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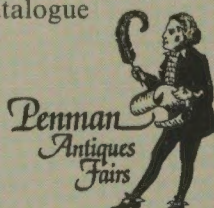
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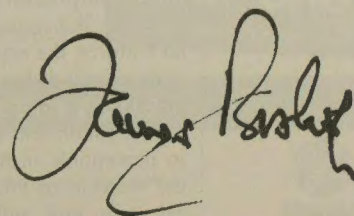
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EDITOR'S LETTER

English churches will be comfortably full this Christmas Day, as they invariably are now at this time of Christian rejoicing. It was not always so. In the mid-17th century Parliament ruled that December 25 should not be observed in church, or anywhere else. On Christmas Day in 1800 only six people took communion in St Paul's Cathedral. At other times, unlike today, churches were usually pretty full, though attendance may not always have been wholly voluntary. Joseph Addison recorded in *The Spectator* how the squire would sometimes stand up when everyone else was on their knees "to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing." Our "traditional" Christmas is not very old. *The Illustrated London News* had no Christmas number in 1842, its first year of publication. Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* was not published until the end of the following year, and the Christmas tree did not become familiar until it was seen to have been given royal approval by Queen Victoria in the 1840s. In succeeding years we have added more trimmings, and today for many of us a visit to church is part of the ritual of Christmas, though we may seldom go at other times. The average Sunday attendance in most parishes is less than 2 per cent of the total parish population; in urban areas the proportion is generally even lower.

The thinness of congregations is one of the elements that are often lumped together in media terms as the Church of England in crisis. Other constituents generally include the surplus of churches (some of which have been adapted or sold off for other uses while others, often listed, sit unused and visibly decaying—a potent symbol of the Church's problems), the destruction of the liturgy, the renunciation of the Church's literary tradition, the abandonment of other established strengths and practices in generally unsuccessful and sometimes ludicrous attempts to adapt to the uncertain whims of a fluid and uncertain society, resistance to change when change is clearly overdue (as with the ordination of women), and the spread of an evangelical fundamentalism that seems in danger of engulfing the Church's liberal tradition. Such dilemmas of the Church of England have been endlessly analysed, in the Synod, in the pulpit, in articles by bishops, in books, even in a play. The most successful of David Hare's modern trilogy at the National Theatre, *Racing Demon*, addresses the problem from the play's first moment, when a worried priest and team-leader in an urban parish comes on stage to ask "God, where are you?" It is a cry clearly understood and appreciated by the audience, who share the Church's own perplexity about its relevance to modern society.

The play is a painful indictment of the present confusion at every level of the Church of England, but perhaps the presence of so many of us in churches this Christmas will help re-establish a sense of need. Popularity is not, or should not be, the fundamental objective. Dean Inge once wrote that a Church "married to the spirit of the age will be a widow in the next", and there is truth in the dictum. Far more important is that the Church should stay true to itself, and to the virtues it has long established, which are widely recognised but not always readily found. They are the virtues of justice, friendship, family relationships, moderation, tolerance and tranquillity. They are very much what we mean when we wish each other a happy Christmas.



NELSON'S COLUMN TOPPING THE SQUARE



The 17-foot-high statue of Nelson was scrutinised by more than 100,000 people when it was put on display for two days in early November, 1843, just before being lifted onto its lofty column.

For 150 years the statue of Nelson has stood on top of its column in Trafalgar Square, 170 feet above ground—far too high now for us to assess its quality. The column, designed by William Railton, is made of grey Devon granite from the quarries at Foggin Tor and was completed in 1842. The capital on which the statue stands was cast from guns from the wreck of the *Royal George*, and the statue itself, by Edward Baily, was made from three blocks of stone from Craighleith in Scotland. It is three times larger than life, standing 17 feet high, and depicts Nelson in his admiral's full-dress uniform. He is not wearing a patch over his right eye.

Before the statue was raised to the top of the column, on November 3, 1843, it was put on public display. *The Illustrated London News* of the day was not complimentary about the close-up view. It was, the *ILN* suggested, "a mere portrait statue, with no attempt to raise the subject above a literal fidelity of figure and costume".

Readers viewing the statue were reminded that they were looking at an object intended to be seen "only at a great elevation", and should not therefore be surprised by the coarseness of its finish. But it had "the sharp, angular features, the expression of great activity of mind, but of little of mental grandeur; of quickness of perception and decision; and withal, that sad air, so perceptible in the best portraits of the warrior, of long-continued physical pain and suffering, the consequence of his many wounds, which

accompanied him throughout his brightest triumphs, though it never abated his ardour."

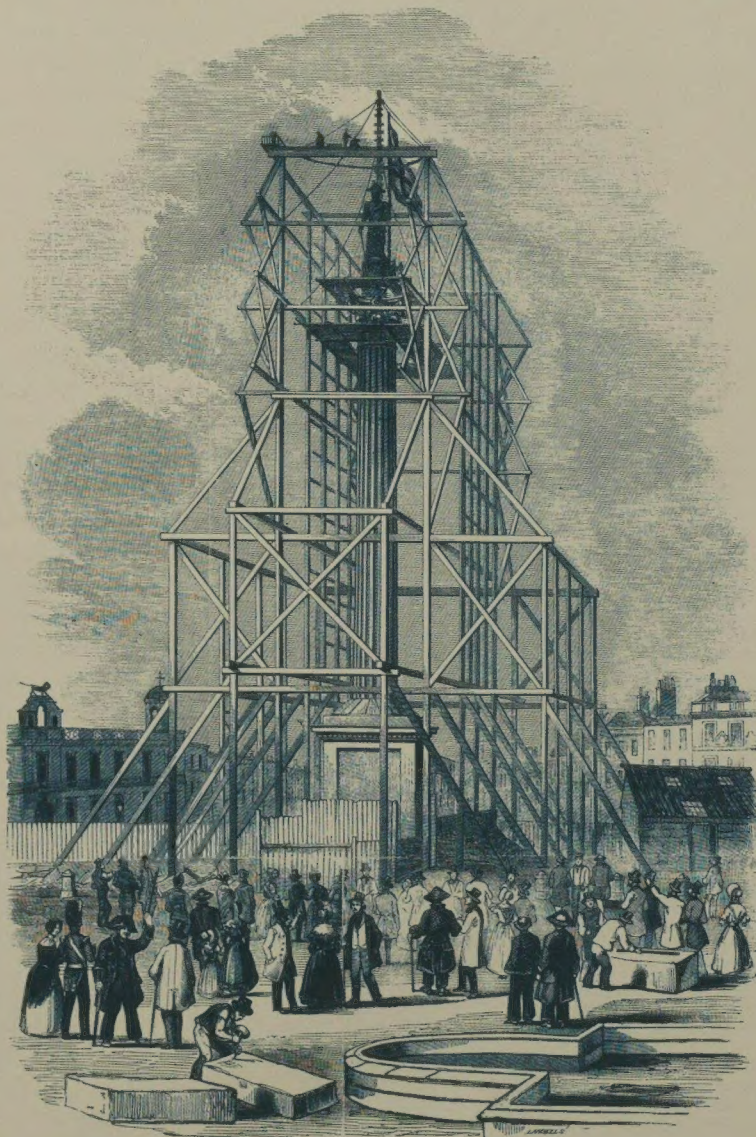
There was no unveiling or opening ceremony when the statue was finally secured on the top of the column, partly because of the "absence from town of most of the gentlemen of the Committee" and partly because there were parts still to be completed. The four bas-reliefs at the foot of the column (made of bronze cast from guns from captured French ships, and depicting the battles of Trafalgar, Copenhagen, St Vincent and the Nile) were not completed until 1854, and Sir Edwin Landseer's lions were not finally put in place until 1867.

The total cost of the project was about £52,500, compared with an initial estimate of £30,000. About £21,000 was raised by public subscription, £500 contributed by Emperor Nicholas I of Russia, and the rest of the funds voted by Parliament.

The column, statue and the lions have been regularly inspected and maintained, more than 4 tons of pigeon droppings being removed from the statue and capital in 1905.

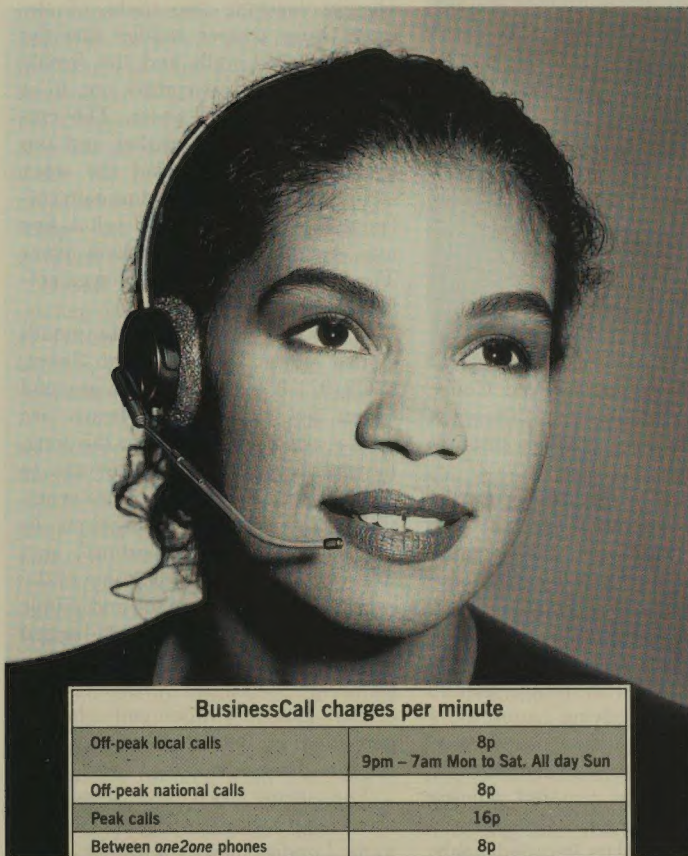
The granite base of the column was damaged during the Armistice celebrations in November, 1918, when a group of soldiers and civilians lit a bonfire which also cracked the granite plinth. In 1941 a high-explosive bomb fell in the square, damaging one of the lions and shifting the statue. The lion was patched up temporarily and then fully repaired, with the statue, after the war. The damaged column was not repaired until 1968.

Further refurbishment was carried out between 1987 and 1989, when the whole of Trafalgar Square was spruced up by the Department of National Heritage, which now has responsibility for the column and the square and spends about £150,000 a year on their well-being.

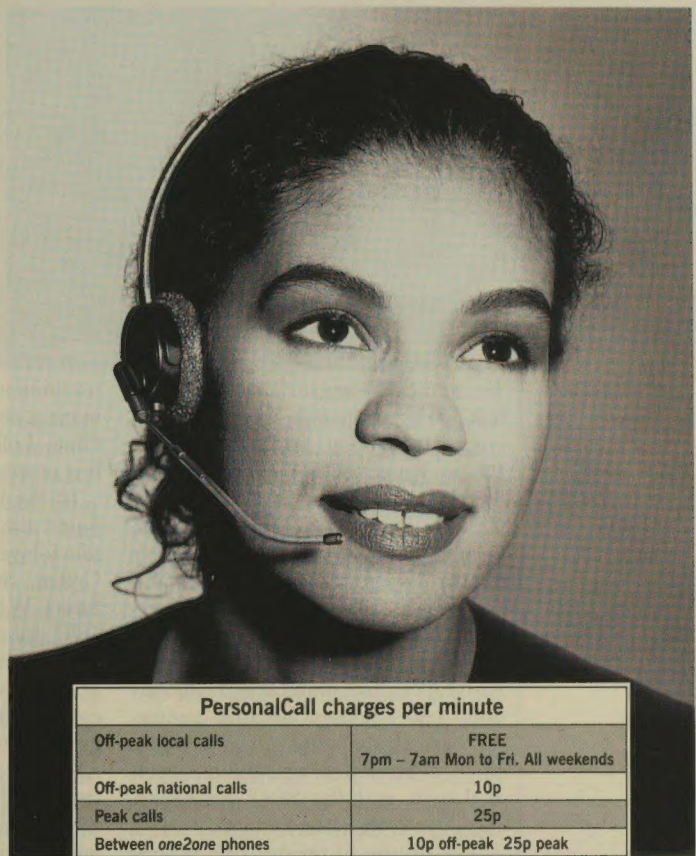


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NELSON'S COLUMN

BEST BREWS IN LONDON



Alma Angelucci weighs out the coffee beans in the Soho shop founded by her father in 1929.

Tea and coffee are sociable beverages, belonging as much to London's present as they do to its past. In 1652 Pasqua Rosee set up a coffee-house in St Michael's Alley, Cornhill, in the City of London, the second to be opened in Britain. From then on their popularity grew enormously and rapidly. Nicknamed "penny universities"—the penny fee offering male patrons a cup of coffee, access to newspapers and stimulating conversation—coffee-houses became centres for radical thought and discussion. Many of the capital's institutions, such as Lloyds and the Stock Exchange, started in such establishments.

The history of tea-drinking is altogether more refined. Popularised by Catherine of Braganza, wife of King Charles II, in the late 17th century, tea was initially considered more of a woman's drink than was coffee, but came to replace coffee in the nation's favour, from which a whole culinary

tradition and etiquette evolved. Coffee made a comeback in the 1950s, when Gina Lollobrigida opened Britain's first espresso bar in Soho.

In the heart of this district can be found the distinctive red façade of a much-loved institution, the Algerian Coffee Stores, 52 Old Compton Street, W1 (071-437 2480), founded in 1887 by an Algerian business man, Mr Hassan. Customers are greeted by a seductive waft of freshly ground coffee and underlying aromas of green cardamom, cloves and other spices. At the long, wooden counter, staff grind coffee as required, offering advice and suggestions to newcomers and greeting regulars knowledgeably. Despite the shop's name, more than 100 teas are stocked in addition to 50 coffees. This is the place for adventurous drinkers willing to experiment with exotic house specialities, such as aromatic Arabic tea, Lebanese coffee with cardamom, Amaretto-flavoured coffee and Turkish apple tea. Further incentives are the extravagantly chic Alessi teapots, *cafetières*, espresso-makers and kettles lining the shelves.

Just round the corner is A. Angelucci, 23B Frith Street, W1 (071-437 5889), a tiny coffee shop set up in 1929 that remains very much a family business. The three charming cherubs surrounding a cup of coffee on the shop's logo were based on Alfredo Angelucci's children, and one of the infant angels, Alma Angelucci, still works in the shop. The best-seller is Mokital Superior espresso, a "secret blend" of beans, ground in magnificent old coffee-grinders. The shop also supplies Bar Italia, a few doors down,

where night-birds can quaff strong espressos in the early morning.

Another old-established supplier is to be found in Mayfair—H. R. Higgins, 79 Duke Street, W1 (071-629 3913), coffee-merchants to the Queen. Founded in 1942 by Harold Rees Higgins ("the Coffee Man"), the business is run today by his son and grandson. Black-and-white family photographs show the young Harold Higgins learning the tricks of the trade, huge copper caddies line the wood-panelled walls and the freshly ground coffee is weighed out in a beautiful old set of scales. The emphasis is on quality—father and son tasting every batch—and the stock includes Jamaican Blue Mountain coffee, sold for £18 per lb, as well as fine teas, such as Formosa Oolong Silver Tip. A speciality is Kibo Chagga coffee from Mount Kilimanjaro.

In Covent Garden the Monmouth Coffee House, 27 Monmouth Street, WC2 (071-836 5272), offers a peaceful haven for coffee-lovers. Beans are both roasted and ground in this long, narrow shop, set up 15 years ago to make real coffee-drinking more accessible and to strip away its mystique. At the back is a small "tasting" area where visitors can sample some of the excellent varieties on offer and nibble on a Sally Clarke pastry. High-backed wooden pews provide privacy, and pleasantly evoke the world of 18th-century Covent Garden coffee-houses patronised by Boswell, Garrick, Goldsmith and Sheridan.

The strong, rich and irresistible aroma of roasting beans greets visitors to the London suburb of Muswell Hill. It comes from W. M. Martyn, 135 Muswell Hill Broadway, N10 (081-883 5642), now in its 96th year. This old-fashioned grocer's shop retains its original dark wooden fittings lined with old tea caddies, boxes of biscuits and packets of coffee and tea. A small roaster in the front window is the source of the tempting smell.

More information about the two beverages will be found near Tower Bridge, at the Bramah Tea and Coffee Museum, Clove Building, Maguire Street, SE1 (071-378 0222). The collection of former tea-planter and coffee-broker Edward Bramah comprises teapots, including Earl Grey's silver teapot, coffee machines and ephemera giving insights into the histories of both trades. In the café there is a chance to sample "real" tea and coffee; tea-bags and instant coffee, condemned by Mr Bramah as debasing the drinks, are emphatically banned.

JENNY LINFORD



PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS WINDSOR

PLANNING FOR THE MILLENNIUM

Greenwich, it has been said, should be to London what Versailles is to Paris. At present it is not, but a determined effort is being made to realise its historic role and potential. The move is linked to a celebration of the forthcoming millennium, and reflects the crucial importance of the Prime Meridian in transforming the modern world's conception of time.

Greenwich, like Versailles, has its impressive ensemble of grand historic buildings, conceived as a royal palace but turned to other purposes and now housing the Royal Naval College and the National Maritime Museum. It also has an attraction that Versailles lacks—the river Thames at its front door; at its back is Greenwich Park rising up to Observatory Hill, crowned by Wren's Flamsteed House.

Patrick Roper, the museum's development director and joint co-ordinator of Greenwich's millennium project, believes the role of the place in the measurement of time and space makes it a natural focus for millennium celebrations. He thinks the park and the Old Royal Observatory will in turn be the focus of much of its millennium activities. Already large television companies from California have been applying to book stands there for midnight on December 31, 1999. Which, of course, is not the right date. The 21st century and the third millennium AD will not begin until the end of the year 2000. But the project solves the problem by proposing a 14-month celebration running from December, 1999, to January, 2001, with the two new years' eves as its twin pillars.

Greenwich is already gearing up for the expected influx of visitors. As part of its £50 million development programme, the museum has recently reopened Flamsteed House; the Queen's House, centre and jewel of the main museum complex, has reopened after a £5 million refurbishment in 1990.

Now the new Royal Parks Agency has moved into the picture. As part of a programme for reinstating the landscape framework designed for Charles II by Louis XIV's landscape architect Le Nôtre, it has concluded that the gigantic grass steps that originally led down from Observatory Hill towards Inigo Jones's Queen's House are not practicable with present visitor numbers. Instead it proposes an alternative Le Nôtre idea: a vast cascade descending in nine flights of steps interspersed by sloping spillways.

Greenwich town centre is already benefiting from a wider initiative—the Greenwich Waterfront Development



ST JOHN POPE

Partnership. This brings together councillors, businesses and community groups in a regeneration strategy for 7 miles of waterfront from Deptford through Greenwich and Woolwich to the new town of Thamesmead. Under its umbrella, similar three-way partnership agencies have been created for Greenwich and Woolwich town centres.

Greenwich's town-centre manager, Todd Strehlow, can point to several improvement projects that pave the way (sometimes literally) for the millennium. They include a £200,000 reroofing and refurbishment of the 1830s market block, and the repaving with traditional York stone of the whole of King William Walk.

Antony Rifkin, co-ordinator of the wider waterfront strategy, sees the millennium project as a key tool in promoting regeneration of the area and assisting the development of its 500 acres of developable land. The biggest of its 14 sites, British Gas's 300-acre Greenwich peninsula holding near the Blackwall Tunnel, is

earmarked for mixed development.

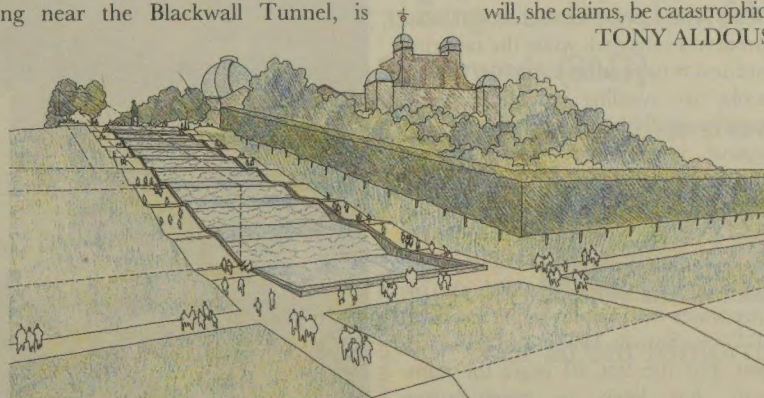
Alongside this are plans to relaunch Greenwich's summer festival of the arts on a larger scale. This is borough-wide and could have as a key venue the Woolwich Arsenal complex with its group of historic buildings.

But in Greenwich itself, though the local community is actively involved in preparations for the millennium and the whole regeneration process, one worry remains: traffic. A stream of it, including many heavy lorries, grinds through the town centre, round the historic market block, and between college and museum. English Heritage has proposed diverting lorries away to the A2 across Blackheath.

The architect Ursula Bowyer, chairman of the Greenwich Society and one of the original Waterfront Development Partnership board members, believes this will not do. Despite a planned extension of the Docklands Light Railway through Greenwich, the conflict between vehicles and the inflow of tourists will, she claims, be catastrophic.

TONY ALDOUS

Greenwich Park: the tranquillity of its setting and the sweeping views that it commands of the river are all factors that will add to the historic attractions here for the millennium.



Simple yet hugely dramatic, this cascade would have nine flights of steps and would take us back to an idea of Le Nôtre, the park's designer.

NELSON'S COLUMN

SAVILE ROW RESURGENT



Ready to return to Savile Row: from right, Peter Day, Lloyd Forrester, Brian Burstow and Harry Errington

The tailors of Savile Row have good reason to go on the cod this Christmas. The phrase is their own, meaning that one or more of their number has gone drinking, and the cause for quiet celebration is that things seem to have taken a turn for the better in the men's bespoke suit business.

A few years ago tailors were facing eviction from the Row as property developers prepared to take advantage of a change in planning regulations allowing some light industrial premises (including tailors' workshops) to be transformed into office use and rents to be hugely increased. Today, with empty office prices at a discount, that threat has subsided, while the tailoring business is beginning to revive. Order-books are swelling (which is not a word used by tailors: a polite "FS" against your measurements stands for "forward stomach"). And more bespoke tailors are returning to the Row.

Among them is the venerable house of Denman & Goddard, which also incorporates the equally respected firms of Carr, Son & Woor and Hicks & Son. For the last 20 years the company has been in neighbouring

Sackville Street (at no 8A), but the address lacks Savile Row's instant association with high-quality tailoring. Master tailors Brian Burstow and Peter Day, the men now in charge of Denman & Goddard, believe that a Savile Row location adds substantially to the opportunity of acquiring new business. Their view is shared by the Federation of Merchant Tailors, which has looked after the interests of bespoke tailors since 1888 (though London did not join until 1898). The Federation estimates that the Savile Row name is worth about £100 million to the business.

The street itself betrays no sign of being paved with gold. Its appearance today is at best utilitarian, the buildings displaying none of the style and understated elegance a man expects to find in the suits that are made there. The Row's origins derive from Lord Burlington, who bought the lease of open land alongside his great mansion to rid himself of the stench from a local glassworks where human excrement was boiled up to make saltpetre.

It was Burlington's grandson, the third earl, who first built Savile Street, as it was then known, in the 1730s, naming it after his wife. The only surviving sign of its original status as a fashionable residential street is at no 1, on the corner of Vigo Street. This house was designed by William Kent in 1733, though its exterior has been much modified. Now occupied by Gieves & Hawkes, the building once housed the Royal Geographical Society, and it was here that Dr David Livingstone lay in state before his burial in Westminster Abbey in 1874.

Bespoke tailoring (the making of a suit for a particular individual from a pattern cut for that individual) is gen-

erally dated to the time of Beau Brummell and the Regency. George Brummell, born in 1778, was a friend of the Prince of Wales, who arranged for him a commission in the 10th Hussars. But army life did not suit, especially when the regiment was posted to Manchester, and Brummell, supported by a legacy from his father, decided to resign, stay in London and concentrate on the development of a style in men's clothing. His high collars, stiff cravats, tight trousers and well-cut jackets were worn with an elegance that the more indulgent dandies of the time could not achieve, least of all the Prince of Wales, who was the despair of his tailors.

Finding themselves much in demand, the London tailors began to gather close to the elegant residential areas of the West End, though it was several years before they infiltrated Savile Row itself. The first tailor to make his mark there was Henry Poole, whose father had set up business in Old Burlington Street, with a workshop at the back (in the Row). Henry turned it round, creating a grand entrance in Savile Row. The firm continues to thrive today—now at no 15—and the shop has preserved some of the features of Henry's day, including a weighing chair.

Other distinguished tailors still in the Row are Kilgour, French & Stanbury, who once made tails for Fred Astaire (at no 8), Bernard Weatherill, the retired Speaker of the House of Commons (also at no 8), Henry Huntsman & Sons, traditionally the most expensive tailor of them all (11), Strickland & Sons (16), and Anderson & Sheppard (30), who are particularly strong in the American market.

Denman & Goddard also have many American customers, and have as well been successfully building up other international business, especially in Europe and the Middle East. They once worked in Eton, where they made suits for kings as well as schoolboys, and in their Sackville Street basement they also house J. A. Terry, maker of shirts not just for his own label but for some of the most renowned shops in Jermyn Street. Terry will be moving with Denman & Goddard to 36A Savile Row before the end of the year, and hopes also to benefit from the new address.

Most of Savile Row's business comes from its reputation and by word of mouth. A personal introduction was once almost *de rigueur* but today, when a Savile Row suit will cost between £1,000 and £2,000, the best introduction is probably a plastic card.



Shirtmaker at work: Julie Jiggins at J. A. Terry's, who will also be moving to Savile Row before the end of the year.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUCY BAKER

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NELSON'S COLUMN

SAVOY THEATRE RESTORED



Above, the Savoy Theatre once again gleams with silver and gold Art Deco opulence.

Below, poster of 1898 advertising *The Gondoliers*.



November 8. It was originally put on there in 1951, starring Gladys Cooper, and ran for 477 performances, marking the Savoy's return to full West End vigour after the war.

That it was such an auspicious production for D'Oyly Carte's famous playhouse first time round is taken as a benign omen by the general manager, Julian Courtenay. "It was very good for this theatre 40 years ago and we believe it will be good for us again," he said.

For this is the first play to open at the Savoy since the fire in 1990 which all but destroyed it. The cause of the blaze has never been established, but the next morning the cost of the damage was estimated at £2 million. Mr Courtenay said then that he expected to reopen within a year. However, he had not reckoned with the unsuspected extent of the damage, nor with the manifold mysteries of Basil Ionides's design, which was not as well documented as had been thought. The architect, Sir William Whitfield, had to turn detective to piece together a jigsaw from plans, photographs, magazine articles and archive material. Consideration was given to abandoning the original design and starting again, said Savoy theatre manager Kevin Chapple, but instead it has been restored in remarkable detail.

The Savoy Theatre opened its doors on October 10, 1881, and was the first public building in the world to be lit by electricity. The design, by one of the principal theatre architects of the age, Charles Phipps, fixed in bricks and mortar the successful partnership of impresario Richard D'Oyly Carte, composer Arthur Sullivan and librettist W.S. Gilbert. Here over the following decade the public was to be offered for the first time *Iolanthe*, *The Mikado*, *The Yeomen of the Guard* and *The Gondoliers*, although the theatre was not exclusively devoted to Gilbert and Sullivan operas.

Before the Second World War Rupert D'Oyly Carte, son of the founder, decided on a dramatic and lavish remodelling. Frank Tugwell was the architect and with Ionides he created a revolutionary new theatre. In five months during 1929 the building was all but demolished and replaced by a stainless-steel-fronted temple to Art Deco modernism.

The walls of the foyers, corridors, staircases and bars were covered in aluminium leaf, with indirect lighting flowing discreetly up and across them, and the decorated ceilings, glass sculptures and gleaming furniture added to the effect of unashamed opulence.

The same decorative language was used for the auditorium, where ingenious perspectives through 82 carved panels led into the stage, adding shape to the space; the ceiling was painted as sky with clouds drifting across; seats were in five different colours; and, more pragmatically, two balcony levels were added. One newspaper called it the "Sunshine Theatre", and Arnold Bennett said: "As regards the decoration, this is magnificent. Mind, I don't mean gorgeous. I mean magnificent."

All that magnificence was destroyed in the early hours of February 12, 1990, when fire broke out, apparently in the rear of the stalls. Flames shot 50 feet into the sky, and by morning the roof had collapsed, the gleaming Ionides panels were unrecognisable, and the gorgeous seats were reduced to metal frames. Although the safety curtain had preserved the stage, dressing-rooms and backstage areas, nothing of the 1929 auditorium remained.

Only fragments of the original plan survived to guide the Whitfield team. On the trail of the Tugwell/Ionides thought process they visited the Victoria and Albert Museum's stores, where they found the classic Chinese designs that had provided the inspiration for the panels which flanked the proscenium arch.

The restoration has also allowed improvements to be made. The seating has been marginally increased to 1,130; the orchestra pit has been re-sited under the stage apron and the lighting control box at the rear of the dress circle; the upper circle bar has been redesigned to give a view across the Thames; and the box office is now electronic. And there cannot be many theatres that can boast a gymnasium, complete with swimming-pool, above them. After more than three years' work, costing £12 million, the theatre was finished in July and inaugurated with a gala charity performance by English National Ballet.

The seats have been restored to the 1929 colours, inspired by zinnia beds in Hyde Park, and range from red to dark yellow. In the old days patrons who booked in advance would be told the colour of their seat so that ladies could match their costumes. According to Kevin Chapple, however, the parti-colouring of the theatre had another purpose: "It's difficult to tell from the stage when the theatre isn't full, and the cast don't get depressed because they can't see the empty seats. Simple craftiness, but it's a problem we don't anticipate having."

SIMON TAIT

NEW ART FAIR



SPINK & SON

A painting by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, an 18th-century Roentgen roll-top desk, a 46-piece Chamberlains Worcester dessert service made for Warren Hastings, an oil painting of St Paul's Cathedral during the Blitz, and a map-of-the-world golf ball are among the objects to be featured at an international art and antiques fair to be held at Harrods from November 12 to 17. Some 84 exhibitors, from the UK, Europe, Scandinavia and North America, will be taking part, and there will also be a loan exhibition put together by the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The Brueghel painting, *The Flemish Proverbs*, completed in about 1600, was executed, like much of this artist's work, in an imitation of his father's style, although there are differences between the younger Brueghel's Flemish proverbs and those painted by his father in 1559. The son's painting will be on view at the stand of Johnny Van Haeften, and is expected to carry a price-tag of around £1 million.

The desk was made by David Roentgen in about 1780 and is one of a group, mostly now to be found in museums, distinguished for the quality of their marquetry. It will be on the stand of Daxer and Marschall, from Munich. The Chamberlains Worcester dessert service was made in about 1795, in the famous Bengal Tiger pattern appropriate for the man who had been first governor-general of Bengal, and will be displayed by Brian Haughton Antiques. Brian and his wife Anna were approached by the chairman of Harrods, Mohamed Al Fayed, and were delighted to take on the organisation of the fair, which they hope will attract new collectors and expand interest in the fine and decorative arts.

As for the golf ball, this is one of five rubber-cored golf balls made in about 1910 showing the continents and oceans of the world, and will be on the stand of Manfred Shotten Antiques. No one seems to know why it was made, nor is there any agreement about who might play with it.

St Paul's Cathedral during the Blitz, an oil painting by Sir Claude Francis Barry (1883-1970), which will be on the Spink stand at the International Art & Antiques Fair at Harrods.

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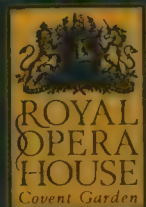
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LEGENDS OF THE CHILD JESUS

ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR BOOKS OF THE MIDDLE AGES WAS A COLLECTION OF STORIES THAT SHED LIGHT ON THE INFANCY OF JESUS AND THE LIFE OF HIS MOTHER. FRANCIS CHEETHAM EXPLAINS HOW THESE TALES AFFECTED CONTEMPORARY BELIEFS.

The Kiss at the Golden Gate was a story so well known throughout Europe during the Middle Ages, that it is surprising how unfamiliar it is today. From early times Christians found the four gospels tantalisingly short of details about the infancy of Jesus and the life of his mother, and were anxious to seize on any scrap of information that would throw light on the divine child and his family.

An Italian bishop, Jacobus de Voragine, who died in 1298, compiled a collection of stories of the lives of the saints and Christ, known as the *Golden Legend*, which was to become one of the most popular books of the later Middle Ages. The tales—many of great antiquity deriving from the apocryphal gospels—were widely believed. They inspired artists and craftsmen, who included in their work scenes and details that are sometimes puzzling today. The story of the Kiss at the Golden Gate was included by Voragine in his book and, becoming increasingly well known, was illustrated in painting and sculpture.

The parents of Mary, mother of Jesus, were Anne and Joachim, who for the first 20 years of their marriage were childless. One day Joachim went up to the Temple in Jerusalem to make his offerings to God, but was repulsed by a scribe who said that because of his childless state he was clearly not blessed by the Lord. In despair, Joachim left the city and lived with shepherds in the country-

side. For five months Anne waited for him, not knowing whether he was alive or dead. Then an angel appeared to her saying: "Fear not, that which shall be born of thee shall be held in wonder to the end of time." The same angel appeared to Joachim and commanded him

to return to Jerusalem. Anne was waiting for him at the Golden Gate and there they embraced and kissed. By this chaste kiss, Mary was conceived. This tale neatly endorsed the Church's doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, by which a wholly sinless woman

THE STORY OF MARY BEING CONCEIVED BY A CHASTE KISS BETWEEN HER PARENTS. RIGHT, ENDORSED CHURCH DOCTRINE OF IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. SCENES SHOWING HER BIRTH, BELOW, WERE ALSO COMMON.









IN LEGEND MARY'S SUITORS EACH HAD A SHORT STAFF, LEFT, JOSEPH'S BURST MIRACULOUSLY TO LIFE, SHOWING HIM TO BE THE CHOSEN ONE, AND AT THE MARRIAGE HE IS PORTRAYED WITH IT.

TITIAN WAS AMONG ARTISTS TO DEPICT THE PRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN IN THE TEMPLE, ABOVE. SCENES OF MARY LEARNING TO READ, BELOW, SHOWED THE RESPECT FOR THAT SKILL AND IMPLIED SHE WOULD HAVE READ PROPHECIES OF THE MESSIAH.

would bear the God-man Jesus. Only at the Reformation was this story lost, not only by Protestants but also in Roman Catholic Europe, where a less precise illustration of the Immaculate Conception was approved showing Mary in a blue robe standing on a cloud, an image popularised by the 17th-century Spanish painter Murillo.

Scenes showing the birth of Mary were common in the late Middle Ages, and two events in her childhood were often depicted. As a young girl she was dedicated to the Temple, where she was welcomed by the high priest. To reach him she had to walk unaided up 15 steps, which symbolised the 15 psalms that the Jewish people had sung when they first glimpsed Jerusalem after their long exile in Babylon. Even more numerous were scenes showing Mary being taught to read, usually holding a pointer, by her mother Anne—an interesting indication of the respect for reading that people had in the Middle Ages. It was an indication too, perhaps, of the need for Mary to read for herself in the Old Testament the prophecies of the coming of the Messiah.

The subsequent betrothal of Mary to Joseph was often illustrated by the legend of her prospective suitors, who each had to hold a short staff as they met Mary in the presence of the high priest. The staff that Joseph was carrying miraculously burst into leaf, a sign that he was the suitor chosen by God. Sometimes the unlucky suitors are

shown breaking their staffs across their knees. As the couple were joined in holy matrimony, Joseph was often depicted still holding his leafy staff.

The gospels describe the Annunciation of the angel Gabriel to Mary that she would conceive a child, although still a virgin. In medieval art Gabriel is usually shown holding a scroll bearing the words "*Ave Maria gratia plena*", and Mary is often seen reading a book bearing the words (in Latin) of Isaiah's prophecy: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son." Medieval man was both practical and precise, and there was a wish to know exactly how this miraculous event had happened. Some medieval art shows a diminutive child issuing from the mouth of God the Father, passing into Mary's body through her right ear.

During the 14th and 15th centuries two mysterious female figures are sometimes included in depictions of the Nativity. The *Golden Legend* explains



*FRA ANGELICO'S PAINTING,
RIGHT, SHOWS THE ANNUNCIATION
OF THE ANGEL GABRIEL TO
MARY THAT SHE WOULD CONCEIVE
THOUGH STILL A VIRGIN.*

their presence: they are the midwives Zebel and Salome. Immediately after the birth of Jesus, Zebel exclaimed: "Virgin she conceived, Virgin she gave birth, and Virgin she remains," but Salome, unable to believe this, approached Mary and asked permission to touch her body to verify Zebel's statement. Salome felt her and immediately her hand withered. Only after she had touched the edge of the infant Jesus's swaddling clothes was the hand healed. This ingenious story demonstrated vividly the danger of questioning the virgin birth.

Almost all medieval representations of the Nativity include the ox and the ass—still a familiar detail on modern Christmas cards yet in the gospels these animals are not referred to; only the manger is mentioned. However, from the fourth century onwards these two creatures became an essential part of the Nativity story, to justify and fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib."

Generally, in medieval art the Virgin of the Nativity reclines in bed as she holds the Child. But in the later Middle Ages there was a significant change. Thereafter the Virgin is often shown kneeling in adoration of the baby Jesus who lies on the bare earth, bathed in a glorious light. This change in representing the Nativity derives from the vision experienced by St Bridget of Sweden when she visited Bethlehem in 1370—an event widely described throughout western Christendom. She saw the Virgin who "suddenly, in a moment, gave birth to her son from whom radiated such an ineffable light and splendour that the sun was not comparable to it. When the Virgin felt that she had already borne her child, she immediately worshipped him, saying: 'Be welcome my God, my Lord and my Son!'"

Joseph is traditionally portrayed as a weary old man, clutching his staff and dozing on a seat near the Three Kings who have come to adore the infant Christ. But the kings, too, are a later belief.



PIRELLA GÖTTSCHE LOWE/ARTS AND CULTURE



THE "WISE MEN FROM THE EAST", LEFT, WERE MADE KINGS AND OFTEN REPRESENTED THE CONTINENTS OF EUROPE, AFRICA AND ASIA.

TWO MYSTERIOUS FIGURES IN THE NATIVITY, ABOVE, ARE THE MIDWIVES ZEBEL AND SALOME; THE OX AND THE ASS APPEAR ONLY IN ISAIAH.



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In the gospels they are simply called "wise men from the east", and their number is not specified. By the Middle Ages they had even acquired names: Gaspar, Balthazar and Melchior, and were thought to represent the three continents, Europe, Asia and Africa (America and Australia being then unknown). After paying their respects to Jesus, the Three Kings, who were not kings at all, were said to have sailed to India, where they died. Their bodies were later reburied in Arabia, where in the fourth century the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, luckily discovered them. The bones of the three men were disinterred and taken to Constantinople. In 1150 the Eastern Roman emperor of the day presented them to the Archbishop of Milan, who took them back in triumph to his cathedral. However, a few years later Emperor Frederick Barbarossa captured Milan, seized the remains of the Three Kings as booty, and sent them back to his own capital of Cologne, where they have stayed ever since.

The gospels tell us that Joseph, Mary and the child had to flee to Egypt to escape Herod's cruelty, and it was on this journey that, according to legend, Jesus performed his first miracle. Mary was resting in the shade of a tall palm tree and wondered whether she could reach the ripe dates to ease her hunger. Jesus called on the tree to give up its fruit to his mother, and immediately the palm bent down so that the fruit could be col-

*ST CHRISTOPHER BEARS THE
INCREASINGLY HEAVY BURDEN OF
THE CHRIST-CHILD ACROSS
THE RIVER, ABOVE LEFT. ABOVE,
A MALEVOLENT STREAK EMERGES
IN THE STORY OF JESUS
TURNING CHILDREN INTO PIGS.*

lected. It was also bowing in recognition of its infant master.

But not all the legends of the childhood of Jesus are beneficent. There are also stories that indicate a malevolent playfulness which is in stark contrast to his character portrayed in the canonical gospels. For example, when some parents heard that the boy Jesus was coming to play with their children, they hid them in an unlit communal oven. When Jesus asked what was in the oven, the parents replied that they were just some sucking-pigs ready for roasting. "So be it," said Jesus, "let them be pigs." The terrified parents threw open the door of the oven and found inside nothing but piglets. In another incident the child Jesus walked on water and called to his companions to do likewise. They did so and were all drowned. On a third occasion he slid down a sunbeam and urged his friends to do the same. They tried and broke their bones.

But one of the most charming stories of the Christ-child is also legendary. Innumerable motorists carry a medal of St

Christopher, harking back to the ancient story of a giant who, out of Christian duty, helped travellers to cross a river. One day Christopher heard a child calling to be carried across, and taking him on his shoulders he began to ford the river. The child became so heavy that the giant could scarcely struggle to the other side. When he reached the bank he asked the child who he was. "So great was thy weight," he said, "that had I carried the whole world on my shoulders I should have had no heavier burden." "Be not surprised, Christopher," was the answer, "for thou hast carried on thy shoulders not only the whole world but the creator of the world." During the Middle Ages an image of St Christopher carrying the child was often painted on a wall inside churches, usually facing the main doorway, as for example in the chapel at Haddon Hall, in Derbyshire. It was popularly believed that anyone who looked on an image of St Christopher before starting a journey would, that day, be protected from sudden death.

Some of the details of legends, such as the Three Kings and the ox and the ass, are so familiar that it is hard to believe they are not mentioned in the gospels. Other early stories, such as the midwives of the Nativity and the unique and momentous kiss of Joachim and Anne, are almost forgotten. In many a modern Christmas card there is much more than meets the eye, especially if the design is based on a medieval illustration □



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Four hundred years after Izaak
Walton's birth, Jeremy Paxman
looks at his account of "the
contemplative man's recreation".

Illustrations by Angel Dominguez.

FOUR CENTURIES OF COMPLEAT ANGLING

The Bible and *The Pilgrim's Progress* are the only books that have been more consistently reprinted than *The Compleat Angler*, or the *Contemplative Man's Recreation*, the most famous sporting book ever published. Since this account of fishing first appeared in 1653 it has been republished in more than 400 editions and has spawned a host of imitations. This is all the more surprising as much of it is pretty unreadable. Its enduring success could be attributable to desperate relatives buying the book as a present for the man they think has everything. For all that, it is still worth making the effort to try to read it.

This is how it begins. It is a May morning. Two men are walking north out of London towards Ware, in Hertfordshire. A third man pulls along to catch up with them and opens the conversation. It turns out that one of the three is on his way to meet a friend who is keeping a hawk for him. The second is about to go off otter hunting. This meets with the new arrival's approval, insufferable prig that he is, and he tells the hunter that he considers him a kindred

spirit, for as "a Brother of the Angle" he hates the otter because it eats fish.

The falconer and the hunter come out with the sort of remark to which all anglers have become used: angling is a "heavy, contemptible, dull recreation". Piscator (the fisherman) sets out to disabuse them. The water is full of "such wonders . . . as the land affords not". Whales three times the size of elephants, dolphins that will answer to music, "lustful and chaste fishes", eels 30 feet long and much more. Angling, moreover, is the perfect balm for a troubled soul.

Venator (the hunter) agrees to join Piscator for a day's fishing, and so the book is off. What follows, from instructions on the way to cook a chub to how to revive your worms when they look a bit wan (feed them cream), is less a practical manual of advice than the conjuring up of an idyll. By the end the hunter is convinced: when he needs confirmation of the power and wisdom of God he will go walking along the river bank and watch "the lilies that take no care".

But any modern reader would have to admit that while parts of the book are

charming, much is otiose beyond endurance. Where, then, is its fascination? *The Compleat Angler* is certainly not the first English book about fishing. That distinction belongs to the *Treatyse of Fysshynge wth an Angle*, part of the *Boke of St Albans*, ascribed to Dame Juliana Berners, the prioress of Sopwell Nunnery, Hertfordshire. This depiction of the joys of hunting, hawking and fishing became so popular after its publication in 1496 that a century later it is said to have outsold any other "contemporary production of the press of lesser eminence than Holy Writ".

Most sporting literature before then was French, produced by people such as the magnificent Gaston de Foix, author of the *Livre de la Chasse*, a man who lived and died for hunting, finally collapsing in 1391 after a day spent coursing for bear above Pamplona. Dame Juliana's *Treatyse* is full of practical advice about how to make fishing-rods, and how to dye horsehair to produce invisible line, and contains patterns for "twelve flyes wyth whyche ye shall angle to ye trought and graylynge, and dubbe lyke as ye

shall now here tell me". Some of the fly patterns she describes are still recognisable and the advice about stalking your quarry, keeping your shadow off the water, even her respect for the environment—"ye shall not be to ravenous in takyng of your sayd game"—holds good today.

Unlike Dame Juliana, Walton was no great fly-fisherman. Worms, grubs and the like were more his style. He describes, for example, how to catch pike by using a frog: "put your hook . . . through his mouth, and out at his gills; and then with a fine needle and silk sew the upper part of his leg, with only one stitch, to the arming-wire of your hook; or tie the frog's leg, above the upper joint, to the armed wire; and, in so doing, use him as though you loved him, that is harm as little as possible, that he may live longer." (That humbug about loving the frog so outraged Byron that he decided Walton should have "a hook in his gullet and a small trout to pull it".)

Walton is not even particularly well informed. Half a century earlier John Taverner had published *Certaine Experiments Concerning Fish and Fruite*, in which he demonstrated an impressive grasp of the life cycle of the fly on which trout feed—how it is laid as an egg on stones and reeds in the river, rises to the top as a nymph when the water warms in summer and hatches on the surface before flying away. Walton is able to tell us only that "Pliny holds an opinion that many have their birth or being from a dew that in the spring falls from the leaves of trees."

In the 1920s G.E.M. Skues, who led the charge against dry-fly puritanism in the struggle that convulsed fly-fishing in that era, wrote that Walton was a "miserable old plagiarist who owed what he knew about fishing to a lady, to Dame Juliana", and to his collaborator in later editions, Charles Cotton. How much fiercer would have been Skues's condemnation had he known how Walton would be exposed in the 1950s. Walton's claim to celebrity rests on his being the most original angling author, particularly in the way he knitted his little book together in the dialogue between Piscator and Venator. Originality of style, say his defenders, is enough to see him through accusations of plagiarism of content.

But the discovery of a yellowing volume in vellum binding in the summer of 1954 turned the whole Walton appreciation business upside down. An American collector, Carl Otto von Kienbusch, was making the familiar post-war trawl through the libraries of British stately homes fallen on hard times when he came across a book called *The Arte of*

Angling. It was the work of the London printer Henry Middleton in 1577 and sold through his bookshop in St Dunstan's churchyard. The title page was missing, so no author's name was given, and the British Museum had no record of the book's publication.

It was a sensational discovery, made particularly exciting by the curious similarities between *The Arte of Angling* and *The Compleat Angler*. These are so frequent that the case is unanswerable that Walton simply filched much of his material. He even repeats factual errors from the earlier version. More devastatingly, *The Arte of Angling*, published 76 years before Walton's "gem of a book", is also written in the form of a dialogue, between Piscator and Viator.

The world of angling bibliophiles (not usually the most excitable of communities) was shaken to its foundations by this discovery. The father of angling literature had been exposed as a literary thief!

WHAT IS UNDENIABLE,
THOUGH, IS THE
SHEER ZEST FOR LIFE
THAT WALTON
SEEMS TO SHOW. . . IF IT
RAINED HE SAT
IN A HEDGE AND SANG.

But who was the father of the more famous son? *The Arte of Angling* refers to fishing in rivers around London and in the river Ouse, in Huntingdonshire. St Ives, Cambridgeshire, is mentioned. Yet the book also displays familiarity with Switzerland. This clue produced the intriguing suggestion that the author might have been a Protestant cleric in exile during the repression of Queen Mary.

From this, the literary detectives produced two prime suspects: Alexander Nowell, who spent more than 40 years as dean of St Paul's, and William Samuel, the vicar of Godmanchester. Although Nowell had his early supporters, it is William Samuel who is nowadays more generally credited with the book that Walton plundered: Godmanchester seems to fit the description of Piscator's home village, Samuel and his wife were both Marian exiles who had lived with John Knox in Geneva.

So now Walton enthusiasts had to concede that their hero was not merely a plagiarist but a far bigger one than any of his early admirers admitted. Yet is Shakespeare diminished because he

stole the plots of his classical plays from Plutarch? Walton, say his supporters, performed a sort of alchemy on the material. What emerged was what Arnold Gingrich called "the greatest literary idyll that any language has ever bestowed on any sport". Walton's many defenders argue that he has suffered from being too much admired. The dialogue style has been imitated in book after book over the centuries. "Charles Lamb was right," says John Walter Hills in his *History of Fly Fishing for Trout*, "when he said that Walton's book is the only treatise written in dialogue which is worth a halfpenny, for in him everything is alive, whereas in others the interlocutors are merely abstract arguments."

The reader will have to make up his own mind about whether Walton's book really is "alive" on every page. (Ed Zern warned the readers of his *To Hell With Fishing*, "If you think *this* book is dull, go curl up with *The Compleat Angler*. Then try to uncurl.") What is undeniable, though, is the sheer zest for life that Walton seems to show. For example, when it was too wet to fish, he would sit in the honeysuckle hedge and sing. He so loved the drinking verse, "The Angler's Song":

"Nor will we vex now, though it rain;
We'll banish all sorrow

And sing till to-morrow,
And angle and angle again",

that he had the bass part printed upside down in *The Compleat Angler*, so that two friends could sit across a table and belt it out in harmony.

I find the picture of Walton sitting in a pub singing his heart out a hard one to imagine. Portraits show a sombre-faced chap beneath a black, broad-brimmed hat, a high-necked tunic buttoned to the chin. He had abandoned London, "finding it dangerous for honest men to be there". By the time that *The Compleat Angler* was published, when he was 60, his life had been touched by more than its share of tragedy.

His father, a Staffordshire innkeeper, had died when Walton was an infant, but family strings seem to have been pulled to secure him an apprenticeship to a London ironmonger. By 1614, aged 21, he is recorded as having "half a shop" near the junction of Chancery Lane and Fleet Street, where he worked as a draper and "Hamburgh merchant".

His first marriage produced seven children, but none survived infancy, and his wife died in 1640. Seven years later he married again and this time two of his three children, a son and a daughter, lived into adulthood. But his second wife died in 1662, leaving him a widower for a further 21 years.

During his time in London Walton



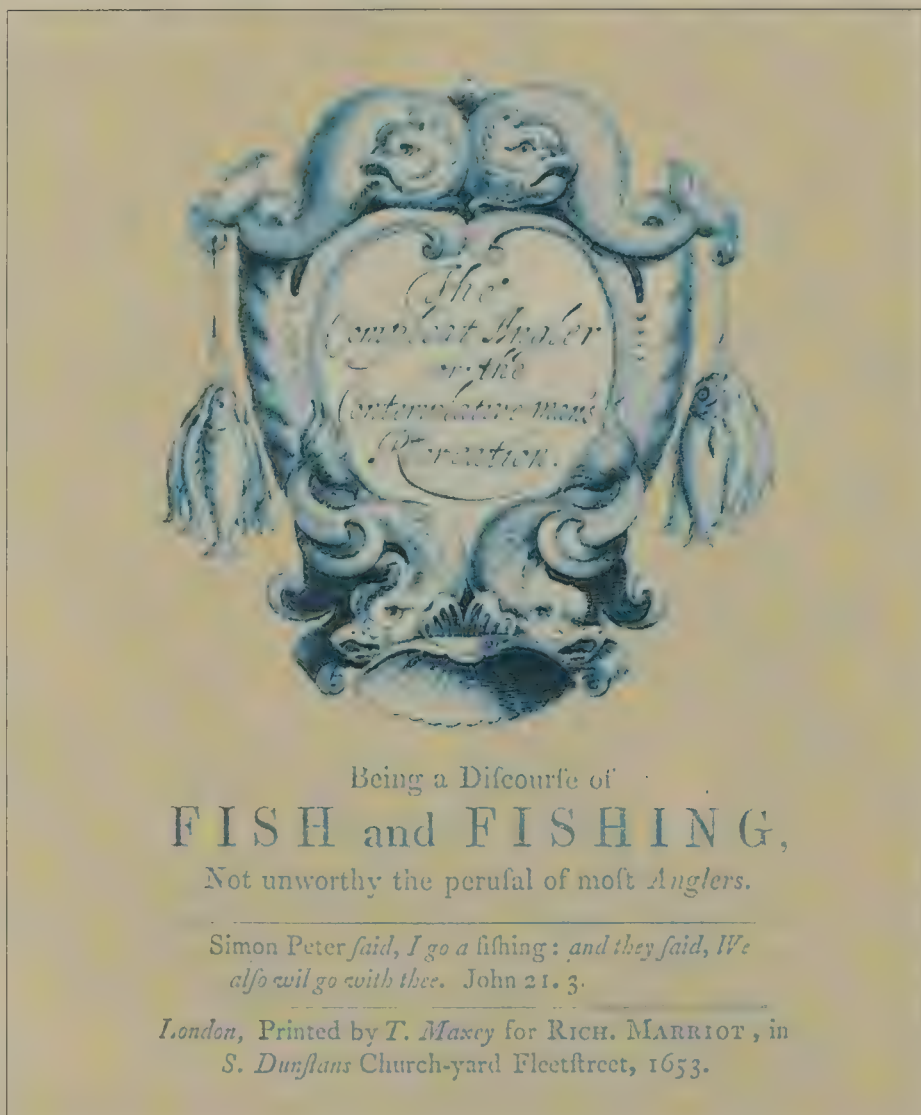
became something of a jobbing writer, a biographer of pious men and poets such as John Donne (another fisherman) and George Herbert. It seems that Walton became the author of the most celebrated sporting book in history only because the intended author died. His friend Sir Henry Wotton had been planning "a discourse of the art of Angling", but died before he could get around to it, so Walton filled the breach. By the time of publication Walton was scarred by the deaths of his children and politically disillusioned by the defeat of the monarchy in the Civil War. At the outbreak of war in 1642 he had left London and returned to live in Staffordshire. We may imagine him growing increasingly morose as news of parliamentary victories reached him there.

There was a brief brush with derring-do. After King Charles II's defeat at Worcester a Cavalier officer managed to rescue one of the crown jewels from the captured baggage train. It was a ring, which was smuggled to Walton with the instruction that he was to get it to a sympathetic officer in London. Walton delivered it successfully and it went on to be reunited with Charles in France. Had Walton been discovered, he would certainly have faced imprisonment, or perhaps worse, as an enemy agent. (Coincidentally, the war and its aftermath produced another angling classic. Colonel Robert Venables, one of the officers on whom Cromwell had relied to put down the Irish, was so alarmed at the restoration of the monarchy that he retired from public life. He settled down and wrote *The Experienced Angler*.)

By then, Walton had decided to spend the rest of his days fishing, writing and revising *The Compleat Angler*. It was during one of these revisions, in 1676, that the 12 extra chapters were added which give the book its enduring interest for fly-fishermen.

Modern fly-fishing began in the 17th century, when recognisable rods and reels, of a kind still in use 200 years later, began to appear. Until then most fishing was bait fishing, a technique with which Walton seems to have been more familiar. Yet *The Compleat Angler* makes no distinction between the factual and the fanciful. Walton is as ready to believe improbable fishermen's tales as would be a six-year-old. So, aware that while his book had become a best-seller it lacked much practical advice, Walton invited Charles Cotton to contribute his thoughts to the fifth edition of *The Compleat Angler*. The book thus celebrates one of the more touching—and unlikely—partnerships in literature.

Dreary old Walton, author of uplifting biographies and intimate of prominent



The title page of the first edition. Since 1653 *The Compleat Angler* has been issued in 400 editions.

clergymen, was then in his 83rd year. Cotton was 46, the clever and irresponsible son of a clever and irresponsible father. The young wastrel had already become something of substitute son to the old sobersides. And Cotton had become devoted to the old man, celebrating "the best and the truest friend ever man had" by building the most idyllic little fishing hut in England. It is hidden away on a bend of the river Dove in Staffordshire, on a little bow just before the river tumbles through the Beresford Gorge, on the Derbyshire border. It stands solid and temple-like, 15 feet square, leaded windows set in stone walls beneath a steeply pitched pyramidal roof. At first sight you might take it for a nonconformist chapel, if nonconformism had a taste for the Palladian.

Closer inspection soon disabuses you. Instead of a cross on the roof, there is a weather-vane in the shape of a trout. The stone lintel over the door is inscribed "Piscatoribus Sacrum". The steps are worn with the cleated soles of three centuries of fishermen's boots. Outside are a ring of fir trees, a circular

sandstone table for lunch and a flat lawn where the two men rested from their fishing with a game of bowls.

Beyond, the river, no more than 15 feet or so across, draws in a deep, slow pool. But down through the gorge below it broadens and slithers over weir after weir, 2 or 3 feet deep, and the trout lie at the edge of the ripples, flicking their tails effortlessly in the stream and sucking down the passing flies.

It was on this "princess of sweet rivers", as Cotton called it, that the two men followed their innocent obsession. The Arcady it represented stands out all the more starkly in contrast to the mayhem taking place around them as king and parliament fought the Civil War.

Charles Cotton's poetry, though unread now, was praised by Wordsworth and Coleridge, and his translations of Montaigne, Corneille and others were distinguished in their day. But Cotton's main talent seems to have been living. He left Cambridge without gaining his degree. His mock heroic poem *Scarronides* was described by one scandalised Victorian clergyman as full of "such foul

imagery, such obscene allusions, such offensive descriptions, such odious comparisons, such coarse sentiment and such filthy expressions as could only proceed from a polluted imagination". Potential readers attracted by this splendidly Whitehousian denunciation should be warned that Cotton's scabrousness is not a patch on that of his rakish contemporary, Rochester.

Cotton is also credited with the authorship of *The Compleat Gamester*, an instruction manual for everything from cock-fighting and horse-racing to card and dice games, to say nothing of the first English guide to billiards. He produced a superb guide to the cultivation of orchids. His preferred breakfast was a pipe of tobacco and a glass of ale. And, to complete what begins to sound like a caricature, he proved incapable of managing his own finances.

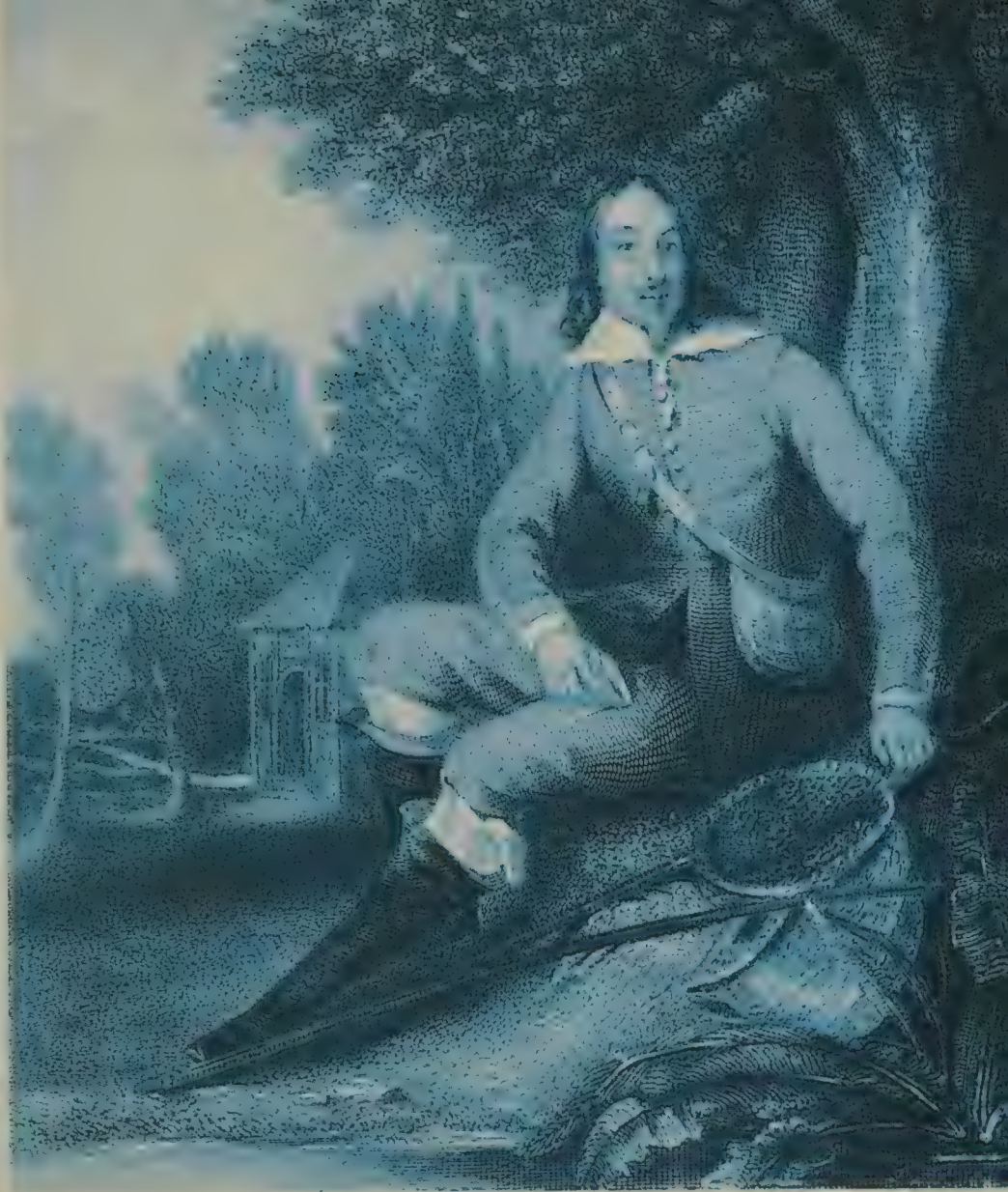
In his father's day Beresford Hall, high above the river Dove, had been considered one of the finest estates in Derbyshire. By the time Charles Cotton had built his fishing temple the place was on its uppers. Twice he had to petition Parliament to be allowed to sell some of the land. Once he was thrown into debtors' prison. Local legend in Dovedale still points to caves in the valley where Cotton would break off from his fishing to hide from creditors who had come down to the river to recover their debts.

Having been approached to contribute to the fifth edition, Cotton predictably left everything to the last minute. By way of apology, he explained later that he had dashed off his *Instructions How to Angle for a Trout or Grayling in a Clear Stream* in 10 days.

As practised by Cotton, fly-fishing involved a line knotted to the top of an enormous rod ("one of 5 or 6 yards is commonly long enough"; on the same river today they are a maximum of 9 feet). There was no reel. The line was made of knotted horsehair—brewery horses were thought to produce the best tailhair, providing there were no urine stains. The flies at the end were allowed to billow on to the water by the wind, or were dabbled on the surface if there was no breeze.

The advice that Cotton dispenses enabled the angler to make the best he could of this cumbersome rig. "To fish fine and far off is the first and principal Rule for Trout Angling." On casting: "do it . . . so that your fly may fall first upon the water and as little of your line with it as possible." When to strike?: "if he does not strike himself, [not] till you first see him turn his head after he has taken your fly."

Cotton explains how to make 65 flies suitable for use on the river Dove. The



Charles Cotton contributed the chapters on fly-fishing in 1676 and became a devoted friend of Walton.

instructions are obsessively precise, involving collecting the "hair of an abortive calf" for the body of a Bright brown, or the fur of a yellow-dun cat for a Barm fly. "Take a small-tooth comb, and with it comb the neck of a black greyhound, and the down that sticks to the teeth will be the finest blue that ever you saw," he tells us for making a Blue Dun. I have never managed to find a compliant greyhound, but I have used the Blue Dun on the Dove and it works

as effectively now as it did back then.

Yet no one would try to read *The Compleat Angler* for practical advice. You can get that in any number of how-to-do-it manuals. Walton and Cotton's book is not so much about fishing as the evocation of an imagined England of clear streams, drowsy meadows and singing milkmaids. True, it is cumbersome, arch and, at this distance, somewhat off-putting. But it is infused by gentleness and warmth.

Once his little book had been published, Walton spent the rest of his life living quietly and simply with his daughter and son-in-law, a prebendary of Winchester. He was 90 when he died, which says something about the benefits of the contemplative man's recreation. Cotton lived to 57, drinking, singing and laughing at his debts to the end.

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**COTTON WOULD
BREAK OFF FROM HIS
FISHING TO HIDE
FROM CREDITORS WHO
CAME DOWN TO
THE RIVER TO RECOVER
THEIR DEBTS.**

□ A Quatercentenary edition of *The Compleat Angler* is available at £42 (plus £3 postage and packing) from The Flyfisher's Classic Library, Mary Street, Bovey Tracey, Devon TQ13 9HQ.

BUNYAN'S WAY

*John Bunyan drew on his knowledge of the
Bedfordshire landscape for The Pilgrim's Progress.
Gillian Tindall retraces his steps.*



“As I walked through the wilderness of this world I lighted on a certain place where was a den, and laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I slept, I dreamed a dream.”



The country round Ampthill, in Bedfordshire, where John Bunyan dreamed his famous dream and turned it into *The Pilgrim's Progress*, is full of signs and symbols, some belonging to Bunyan's pilgrim, that archetypal backpacker, some to more worldly-wise spirits. Even today it is splendid country for a foot-traveller, criss-crossed with old paths, blessed with wide skies and sudden views; it is another England from the green claustrophobia of the Home Counties. Yet the pump at Ampthill is only an hour by car from Tottenham Court Road.

This is the problem with Bedfordshire: people who do not know it do not take it seriously. Even if you avoid “Time for Bedfordshire, m'dear” jokes, a mention of the county is apt to evoke patronage rather than enthusiasm. Too readily accessible up the M1 to enjoy the status of a separate provincial region, Luton-and-Dunstable are today perceived as metropolitan outposts with Woburn and Whipsnade for parks. Yet other parts of the county are seen, perversely, as “too far out”, tainted with the Midlands and all that the term represents in English territorial snobbery—“He had a wife/And two pale children in a Midland town” . . . “living in the Midlands/That are sodden and unkind.” There are proper industries in Bedfordshire and the farming is for real. Disused cowsheds stand with holes in the roof instead of being turned into “sensitive conversions”. Plastic bags and silage lie around on the edge of great golden prairies producing rape-seed oil. Gardens are used less for the drinking of gin and tonic and more to park the caravans for taking to the Essex coast.

If Bunyan were to rise today from his grave in Bunhill Fields and take a trip back to the City of Destruction—Bedford, where he was twice imprisoned for dissent (trains every half hour from St Pancras or Kings Cross Thameslink)—he would recognise much. There are brick-and-timber houses that were standing when he was born in 1628, and the same rich-red local bricks in other houses built long after. He would still see the water meadows of the river Ouse (suggested as the original location of the Slough of Despond) and also the wooded stream of the Flit to the south for him, the River of Life. Both Bunyan's

*Top, the motte of Cainhoe Castle, which already was derelict and its adjoining village deserted 300 years before Bunyan's time, as a result of the Black Death. As Doubting Castle, it was the scene of Christian's and Hopeful's incarceration by Giant Despair. Above and previous pages, modern farming methods have proved even more destructive to Bunyan's Bedfordshire countryside than war or pestilence, but good paths remain for the foot-traveller. Right, the commemorative window in the Bunyan Meeting House featured on a postcard sent to the captive Terry Waite in Beirut. The first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was written in Bedford's county gaol.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HOMER SKINS



Bedford gaols have gone and so has the meeting-house of which he was pastor. But in the later building on the site is a stained-glass window showing him in prison. It was a postcard of this, like a message through time from one persecuted pilgrim to another, that cheered Terry Waite in his Beirut dungeon.

Those who absorbed *The Pilgrim's Progress* in childhood may feel that the

City of Destruction, from which Christian flees with his sin on his back at the beginning of his great journey, ought to be somewhere impressively awful like 1980s Beirut, indeed, or perhaps old London complete with plague and fire—not just homely Bedford. But Bunyan spent most of his youth within the same few square miles south of the town, and it was these English hamlets,

hills, valleys and streams that he internalised as his own version of the soul's landscape. The Bible spoke to him of deserts and mountains and perilous passes, the dramatic actual landscape of Palestine, but the son of the Elstow tinker translated these concepts in terms of the only world he knew.

You can make your own pilgrimage even now in Bunyan's footsteps. It is a



good day's country walk, or an encapsulated allegory for life's journey, whichever way you choose to see it. There are pubs with gardens and competing quantities of food for when you feel you have temporarily had enough of Christian's abstemious struggle towards the Celestial City, hidden somewhere in the Delectable Mountains of the Chilterns. Girls with trays of olde Englishe roast beef struggle through the Sunday crowds of more committed drinkers—"I'll have a pina colada, reminds me of Corfu—d'you remember, Ken? There was a drink called sex-on-the-beach too . . ." (Sin isn't what it was these days.)

Elstow, just outside Bedford, is fighting off the modern dragons of over-development and in-fill. The late-15th-century Moot Hall on the green is a Bunyan museum and a row of medieval cottages with beams like glazed chocolate still stands in the High Street, though his own home has gone. The large church was part of history well before he was baptised there. It was a fashionable abbey when nuns wore cambric and entertained princes of the church to a glass of wine and sometimes to other things as well. (Sin was proper sin then.) The nuns had been sent packing at the Reformation, their abbey was mostly

destroyed except for the church and its separate bell tower: the stones were used to build the gentleman's residence that became Bunyan's Stately Palace.

The lone tower conveniently became the Strong Castle of Beelzebub, from which arrows could be shot at the wretched sinner trying to make it away to a better life through the narrow wicket gate, which is fitted like a battered medieval cat-flap into one of the doors of the church and proudly shown to visitors. Inside there is a turn-of-the-century window of Christian's adventures as full of graphic detail as a child's picture book. I hope Bunyan's austere ghost is not shocked at all this worldly fame.

His actual birthplace is a different matter. About a mile distant across the fields, it can be reached today by walking through the outlying housing estates and round past a factory and RAF Cardington to an inconspicuous dirt track that

leads to a farm and is marked "Private". Only if you have the faith to take this road will you come to a sign in the hedge: "Visitors to Bunyan's birthplace only. Proceed by the side of the brook. Please do not damage the crops."

I am not sure what I expected. Another complete thatched cottage, still full of pots and pans? An ivy-covered ruin? One of the crosses that are plentiful in this haunted countryside? What I found, down a tiny trodden path, hidden in nettles, was a plain stone put up in Festival of Britain year to mark the spot. Narrow is the way that leadeth unto eternal life.

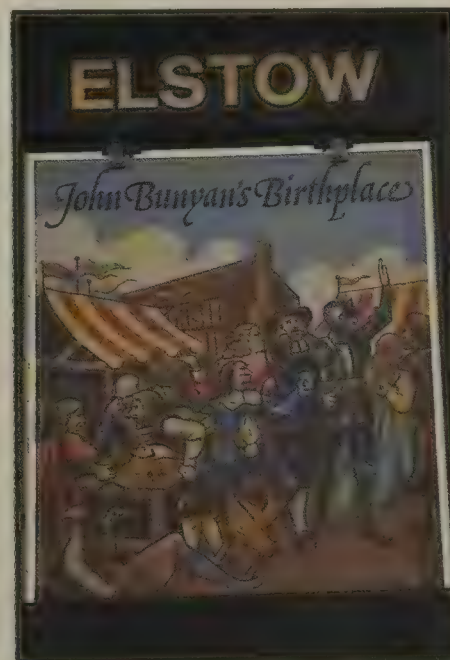
A truly impressive ruin lies 5 miles south of Bedford, just before you come to Ampthill. It stands on top of the Hill Difficulty (a pleasant incline with a view over satanically smoking brick kilns) and it is all that is left of Houghton House, otherwise the Palace Beautiful. It was built a few years before Bunyan's birth for the widow of Lord Pembroke, sister to Sir Philip Sidney. She died shortly after its completion, prompting the poet William Browne to write in her epitaph: "Death! ere thou hast slain another,/Fair and learn'd, and good as she,/Time shall throw a dart at thee." Bunyan visited the place as a shy young man and was shown in the library "records of great antiquity".

Perhaps some of these dealt with the

*Today Bedfordshire
is splendid
country for a foot-
traveller.*



Top, medieval houses in Elstow, whose most famous son was baptised in the church, opposite page. To its left are ruins of Hillersdon Hall—Bunyan's Stately Palace—built on the site of a Benedictine nunnery. The church bell-tower became Beelzebub's Strong Castle. Above left, like Christian, Bunyan would have had to toil up the Hill Difficulty with a heavy burden (his tinkers' tools and anvil) to reach Houghton House, the Palace Beautiful, from where he could have glimpsed the distant Chilterns, or Delectable Mountains. Above right, the author's shackles are broken in Joseph Boehm's statue of 1874 on St Peter's Green, in Bedford.



ancient mound near Clophill a few miles to the east, which is thought to have been the original of Doubting Castle, the home of Giant Despair and his wife, Diffidence. It is still called "Castle Hill" on the Ordnance Survey map, and in Bunyan's day there were the remains of a medieval fortress on the top, but today there are only sheep and rabbits and the blowing wind. At least the

place retains a hint of strangeness, unlike the Valley of the Shadow of Death (the area around Millbrook, west of Ampthill), which has been gentrified beyond recognition.

Yet the Shadow of Death did reappear in this territory two centuries after Bunyan, when Ampthill Commons became a transit camp for soldiers on their way to the battlefields of the Somme □

Above left, a modest memorial marks John Bunyan's birthplace near Elstow. Before enlisting in the Parliamentary army, the young tinker danced and played tip-cat on Elstow green, top, where the Moot Hall stands. It can be seen in the sign, above, depicting Christian and Faithful resisting the temptations of Vanity Fair.

Royal Viking Cruise Offer

A chance to win a pair of tickets for a unique luxury transatlantic cruise to Normandy for the D-Day anniversary.



Luxury afloat: the sleek and spacious Royal Viking Sun.



Informal dining in the light and airy Garden Cafe.

A cruise through French Canada and across the Atlantic in time to be off the Normandy beaches for the 50th anniversary of D-Day next year is offered by Royal Viking Line. The company is also giving *ILN* readers a chance of winning two free passages on what promises to be a most memorable voyage.

The cruise begins in London on May 24 with a flight to Montreal, where passengers will stay overnight in Le Quatre Saisons before embarking on the luxury *Royal Viking Sun*, one of the largest and most spacious cruise ships afloat. After sailing down the St Lawrence river to the city of Quebec the ship will continue to St John's, Newfoundland, before setting off across the Atlantic to Waterford, in Ireland, where she will dock early on June 4.

After a day in the town, the ship will make an overnight Channel crossing and arrive the next day at Cherbourg, where she will stay for 24 hours to enable passengers to visit the Normandy landing beaches. On the evening of June 6, the actual anniversary of D-Day, the *Royal Viking Sun* will cruise along the Normandy coast and up the Thames to Greenwich, where she will be moored for two

days before crossing again to France and sailing up the river Seine, where the voyage will end, on June 10, at Rouen. After a last night on board passengers will be transferred to Paris for the return flight to London.

As an alternative ending to the voyage, passengers will be offered an option of staying for the night of June 11 at the elegant Hôtel Ambassador, in Paris, and returning to London on board the legendary Orient-Express train. This exciting option will be included for the winner of the D-Day competition, which will go to the first all-correct entry to be drawn on January 6, 1994.

To enter the competition answer the questions published below and return the completed coupon to: The Illustrated London News (Anniversary Voyage), 20 Upper Ground, London SE1 9PF. You will be sent a Royal Viking Line 1994 brochure in acknowledgement. The winner of the two free passages on the cruise will be notified early in January. If you do not wish to enter the competition but would like a brochure, call 071-493 6041.

Royal Viking Line Cruise Offer

Answer the following questions by writing (a), (b) or (c) in the box provided.

1. Rehearsals for D-Day landings were held on a number of English beaches. One was interrupted by German E-boats, which sank two US landing-craft. Which was the beach?
(a) Southwold (b) Slapton Sands (c) Littlehampton
2. The beaches attacked by the US First Army were named after places or states in America. Which of these was a landing zone on D-Day?
(a) Utah (b) Wyoming (c) Nebraska
3. Bad weather delayed the invasion. By how many days?
(a) 3 (b) 7 (c) 1
4. What was the name of the bridge the 6th Airborne Division had to capture intact?
(a) Formigny (b) Pegasus (c) Reville
5. Who instructed Churchill not to go on board HMS *Belfast* to watch the invasion from the Channel?
(a) The Cabinet (b) Mrs Churchill (c) King George VI
6. Who commanded the British 1st Airborne Division at Arnhem?
(a) Lt-General Browning (b) Major-General Urquhart (c) Major-General Hobart.

Your name

Address

Tel no.

Return this coupon to: The Illustrated London News (Anniversary Voyage), 20 Upper Ground, London SE1 9PF.

CHRISTMAS A LA MODEM

DAVID SPANIER SUGGESTS THAT TRADITIONAL
FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT MAY SOON BE REPLACED
BY INDIVIDUAL VIDEO GAMES.

SCENE: THE JONES FAMILY LIVING-ROOM

TIME: CHRISTMAS DAY

Mother in apron, father in a muddle, children gazing into video screens.

MOTHER: Happy Christmas, kids!

JOHNNY: Uh-huh.

SHARON: Yee-ow!

MOTHER: Do you have to play these games when the turkey's nearly ready?

JOHNNY: Just finishing.

SHARON: Only a tick.

FATHER: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I distinctly heard your mother say "Happy Christmas!"

SHARON: Is it Christmas already?

JOHNNY: I said it earlier, but you didn't hear me.

FATHER: Did you? When?

JOHNNY: First thing this morning, but you were playing with your Football Manager game.

FATHER: Was I? Yes. You know, I do believe I can get my team through to the first division. All I need to do is organise the youth team and go into the transfer market.

JOHNNY: Yes, but you risk being disqualified if you go over budget.

FATHER: Oh, no chance of that! I won an extra half-million for high attendances. Let me show you.

MOTHER: George! Not just before lunch. Grandma and Grandpa will be here any minute.

JOHNNY: Wicked! I've killed the Giant Scorpion Boss. Now I can get the crystal from the dungeon and go up to level two. I've been trying to beat Zelda IV ever since school broke up.

MOTHER: How many levels are there?

JOHNNY: Oh, it takes forever—there's about 20 dungeons!

SHARON: That's nothing. My Tetris is endless.

MOTHER: And what level are you on, dear?

SHARON: Oh, God! I've blown it! I was

doing really well until you interrupted me, and now I've gone back to the start again. Damn!

MOTHER: Language, Sharon! It is Christmas for Heaven's sake.

JOHNNY: I just can't find a way to get to the other side of the room! There's no ladder!

FATHER: I think I can show you that. We were playing it at the office in a coffee break and someone taught me how to make the jump. Look, it goes like this.

Doorbell rings. Mother goes to answer it and returns with grandparents, bearing gifts.

MOTHER: George! Do get up and say Happy Christmas to Grandma. Really!

FATHER: Happy Christmas!

GRANDMA: I've got something here for you children.

SHARON: Can we open it later, Grandma? Look at this. I'm just in the middle of Parodius. It's a major shoot-'em-up, and if I can get my spaceship through it's worth two extra lives. I'm going to zap this little guy . . . right . . . there!

GRANDMA: These games bring out so much violence in the younger generation. I do wish they weren't all so full of shooting and killing. I'm sure they warp children's minds.

JOHNNY: Actually my magazine says that games have a very positive effect on us, by sharpening our reactions and encouraging logical thinking.

FATHER: Well, Johnny, you didn't do too well at maths in your exams last term, did you?

JOHNNY: 'Course I didn't—you wouldn't let me play the game long enough, to really sharpen up my calculating ability. Much better than homework.

FATHER: If you're so good at logical thinking, perhaps you could help your mother with lunch.

JOHNNY: Just a sec, Dad.

GRANDMA: Anyway, I can't believe *you*

play all these violent games, Sharry!

MOTHER: Of course not. What about that nice Barbie Goes Shopping game?

SHARON: Oh, that has such crap graphics. I like Starwing better. You're in a spaceship beating up the evil empire.

GRANDPA: You'll like this one, Sharry. It's a brand new beat-'em-up from Japan that's overtaken Mortal Kombat.

They recommended it in the video shop.

SHARON: Wicked!

JOHNNY: Cool! What is it?

GRANDPA: Open it up; I got it specially.

JOHNNY: (*ripping off paper*) Wowee! Street Fighter II Turbo!

GRANDMA: This is for you, my dear.

MOTHER: (*unwrapping parcel*) What is it? Oh, Omar Sharif's Grand Slam Bridge! Just what I wanted!

FATHER: Darling, you'll never learn bridge properly, with or without a machine.

JOHNNY: Dad, that's a real chauvinist remark. You can learn a lot from games programs. Even Mum.

SHARON: Oh, get real! Dad didn't mean it.

MOTHER: Well, I'd better go and baste the turkey.

GRANDPA: That can wait a moment. I had a wee go at the game myself last night, and I must say—

JOHNNY: Look, you can choose your opponents' level: weak, medium or strong.

FATHER: I think we can safely decide which level is going to be right for your mother.

MOTHER: Look at that hand! Only 14 points. I can't bid three no-trumps on that, surely?

FATHER: Why not? It's what you did at the Bishops' last night.

SHARON: I wonder whether Omar Sharif knows what to do?

JOHNNY: 'Course he does. This hand's rubbish, Mum. Move the mouse over and click on the double option.



MOTHER: This is funny. It says I ought to bid two clubs and go for game.

GRANDMA: What's that burning smell from the kitchen, dear?

MOTHER: (*leaping up*) Oh, my goodness! Why am I wasting my time when I've got so much to do?

FATHER: I always say you can only really learn from practical play. Oh, is this for me? A chess program, eh? That looks rather interesting. I'll just take a quick look at it while you children give your mother a hand.

SHARON: OK, if you insist. I'll take this Game Gear with me.

GRANDMA: What, dear?

SHARON: It's a hand-held games system. Like my big computer, only portable.

JOHNNY: I can't stop now. I'm in the middle of Sim City. This one really will help me with my schoolwork, Dad. I'm the mayor and I have to build a town, and remember loads of things like pollution and traffic problems, and not to site industry next to housing areas.

GRANDPA: Glad to see you're not all barbarians. Perhaps there's hope for the youth of today after all.

FATHER: Mm, I'd like to try that. But look here. Kasparov and Short are playing their opening game, and on move seven the computer says that Short ought to move his queen. I wonder if I could try that opening?

JOHNNY: Oh, so you can't learn anything from computer games, eh, Dad?

MOTHER: Five minutes to lunch! Everyone wash their hands.

FATHER: (*engrossed*) What? Hang on a mo'.

SHARON: (*laughing*) Lunch will be ready as soon as Mum finishes her bridge hand, more likely!

GRANDMA: Let's go into the dining-room and wait for them.

GRANDPA: There's not much sign of them moving. Would you like a sherry, dear?

GRANDMA: Just a small one.

GRANDPA: What shall we do while we're waiting?

GRANDMA: I suppose we could talk to each other, like everyone used to do at Christmas □

STAR OF WONDER

*THE MYSTERY OF THE STAR THAT LED THE THREE
WISE MEN TO A STABLE IN BETHLEHEM
ABOUT 2,000 YEARS AGO CONTINUES TO FASCINATE.
PATRICK MOORE REVIEWS THE EVIDENCE
IN SEARCH OF AN ASTRONOMICAL EXPLANATION.*



during the early part of December the planet Venus will be a brilliant object in the eastern sky before dawn. Admittedly it will have disappeared by Christmas, but this will not stop many people from asking the oft-repeated question: "Can Venus have been the Star of Bethlehem? If not, what was it?"

This has been put to me more times than I can count. Let me admit, without further ado, that I cannot tell you what the Star was. All I can attempt is an explanation of what, in my opinion, it was not. But first let us examine what evidence we have.

There is very little to guide us. The Star is mentioned only once in the Bible: in the gospel according to St Matthew, chapter 2, verses 1-2. Matthew tells us that "there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." He continues (verses 7-10): "Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the

young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."

That is all. The other gospels make no mention of the Star, so from the outset our information is deplorably scanty. To make matters worse, we are unsure of our dates. The one thing about which

*"The Meeting
of the Magi", in the
15th-century
Très Riches Heures
du Duc de Berry.
The Star was unknown
to astronomers
and troubled Herod.*





Above, the 1872
Bretid meteor shower.
A similar display
of shooting-stars might
have been seen
by the three wise men.

we are certain is that Christ was not born on December 25, AD1. Our AD dates are reckoned according to the calculations of a Russian monk, Dionysius Exiguus, who died in about 556. He computed the date of Christ's birth to be 754 years after the founding of Rome, and the system has become so firmly established that it will certainly not be altered now, even though it is almost definitely wrong. Christ was actually born some years earlier than Dionysius Exiguus stated, and the favoured date is 4BC, though scholars' calculations differ. Moreover, December 25 was not celebrated as Christmas Day until the fourth century—by which time the real date had been forgotten, so that our Christmas is wrong too.

(Our rather illogical calendar also omits year 0: 1BC is followed immediately by AD1. This means that the first day of the coming century will be January 1, 2001, not January 1, 2000, which is bound to cause confusion in a few years' time.)

If we are looking for an astronomical explanation of the Star of Bethlehem, Venus is the obvious choice. It is far brighter than any other star or planet and can even cast shadows; it can

appear in the east before dawn, and it can be seen when the sky is too bright for the other stars or planets to show up. Yet a moment's thought will show that the star cannot have been Venus, or any other planet or star, simply because everyone would have known about it. If the wise men could be deceived by Venus, they would hardly have been very wise! Herod, too, need only have stepped outdoors and looked for himself. Yet he was "troubled", to use Matthew's term, because according to the reports he received the Star was so out of the ordinary that it could not easily be explained away. So we must look for some unusual celestial event.

The classic theory (I am tempted to call it "the hoary old theory") is that the star was in fact a close planetary conjunction. There are times when two planets appear side by side in the sky, as on August 12, 1990, when Venus and Jupiter were within three minutes of arc of each other (this was merely a line-of-sight effect; Venus is much closer to us than is Jupiter). On January 3, 1818, Venus actually passed in front of Jupiter and hid, or occulted, it for a brief period. Various conjunctions of planets occurred around the time of the birth of Christ but, again, contemporary astronomers would have known all about them, everyone could have seen them, and they would have lasted for several nights. To my mind this is enough to rule the "conjunction theory" completely out of court.

Next, what about Halley's Comet? Again we draw a blank. The Comet came back to the Sun in 12BC (or 11BC, depending on which style of calendar you adopt), and this is several years too early. We have no record of any other brilliant comet seen around this time; if anything of the sort had appeared there would certainly have been reports of it.

Now and then a brilliant star appears where none has been seen before. Very rarely this may be a supernova, the result of a colossal stellar explosion ending in the virtual destruction of a star. In our own Galaxy three supernovae have been seen during the past 1,000 years: those of 1054, 1572 and 1604, all of which became visible to the naked eye in broad daylight. However, it is very unlikely that this can be the explanation for the Star of Bethlehem, because a supernova would have been recorded by the astronomers of the time and would have remained in view for several weeks.

All in all, we have to find something which is visible only fleetingly, which moves, and which is unusual. In my opinion there is only one possibility: that the Star was in fact two meteors.

A meteor is a fragment of cometary

One theory suggests
the Star was a
conjunction of Jupiter
and Venus, as
seen here in 1972.



debris, usually no larger than a grain of sand. If it dashes into the upper atmosphere, moving at anything up to 45 miles per second, so much heat is created by friction that the meteor burns away in the streak of luminosity that we call a shooting-star. An exceptional meteor may be strikingly conspicuous, and the after-effects may persist for anything up to a quarter of an hour.

Let us suppose that the wise men saw a meteor, travelling east. They would not have had the slightest idea as to its cause, and to them it would have seemed truly miraculous, particularly if they had never previously seen anything of the sort (which is quite likely). If a second meteor appeared later, moving in the same direction and in much the same way, they would have regarded the miracle as confirmed.

This would not be an improbable coincidence. Several times a year the Earth passes through a shoal of meteors, and we see a shower of shooting-stars apparently issuing from the same point in the sky. This year, for example, the Perseid meteors should have provided us with a grand display on August 11, although in the event they proved rather disappointing.

The meteor theory would explain why nobody except the wise men saw the Star and why they regarded it as unusual. It also provides a reason for the exceptional phenomenon not being recorded elsewhere. It is not a wholly convincing

explanation, and there will be people who maintain that the Star of Bethlehem was supernatural—but after a lapse of 2,000 years we can hardly hope that the problem will ever be solved □

Without any scientific
evidence, 2,000
years after the event,
the traditional
image still survives.



METEOR THEORY: PETER GUNTER; TRADITIONAL IMAGE: JACQUES LEONARD

A RESPECTABLE WOMAN

SHORT STORY BY ALAN SILLITOE



Travelling south, Paul enjoyed the slow melting of cloud after passing the watershed, *le partage des eaux*—white lines waving on a brown board prominently displayed beside the motorway—but the pleasure often had to be paid for with worsening weather on the trip homeward from the Mediterranean. That was life. What you didn't expect, you didn't appreciate. An electric dark-blue sky between downpours turned into a threatening decline of the day.

Somewhere beyond Rheims, on the way to Calais, white headlights made little impression on swathes of water at the windscreen, wipers sluggish on the fastest rate. He seemed to be driving under the sea, and marvelled at the occasional car overtaking confidently into the slush.

Life was too short to be maimed, or

even killed, in such a way, so he argued with himself about parting from the motorway at the *accrues* exit. Eight o'clock meant he would be lucky to get a room in Cambrai, but a sizzle of lightning settled him to try.

He trawled the streets, deserted under heaven's free wash, calling at three places that were full. Coming again out of the main square, onto a road he did not know, he pulled in at the *Hôtel de la Paix* and took a room large enough for a family, with no option but to pay up and bless his good fortune.

The way had been long from the house in Tuscany. After leaving Wendy at Pisa airport, with their two sons who could not be late for school, he drifted up the motorway through mountains he had always wanted to walk in. Wendy did not like the car trip but he enjoyed doing it alone, whether or not he was late slotting back into managing his

electronics firm. A long drive was good for mulling over the problems he might find when he arrived there.

He backed into the last vacancy of the courtyard. All the other cars faced inwards, but a quick getaway, though rarely a necessity, was always neat to think about. He took his overnight case to the room, washed and changed into a suit, and went downstairs before the restaurant closed. The tourist season lagged on, and he stood between the bar and reception counter waiting for a table, rain at the window locking his gaze as firmly as had the tarmac sweeping all day under the car.

A dark-blue Renault stopped at the door, and he assumed the GB plate because of the side the driver stepped from. She ran in like a goddess coming from the ocean to be born—he couldn't help telling himself—and when she asked at the counter for a room he felt





some satisfaction in knowing the answer.

"Damn," she cried, "nothing at all!"

The clerk told her.

She had been all over the town—and so have I, Paul thought. "Isn't there another hotel you can recommend?"

It was no feat to pick up her responses: "I can't go on in this atrocious weather. What the hell am I to do?" His feeling of guilt was overridden by exaltation at having got there before her.

"They'll all be full," the clerk said. "I telephoned around for someone a few minutes ago."

Paul—with no reason to be concerned at her plight (though he was)—sensed her annoyance at whoever might be responsible, and he for one wished he knew who it could be. A day on the road sleeved by the rich landscapes of France acted on him like a drug, opening his mind to spaces that made him ready for anything, especially after the relief of finding such an opulent billet. He couldn't think why he said it: "I might have a solution to your problem."

She stood in the doorway, a tall woman, in her late 30s perhaps, with short, reddish hair and gold-framed spectacles, an opened raincoat showing a pale-cream blouse, a loose purple skirt, and short black boots that zipped up the front. "Well, it's my problem. I'll just have to drive on."

"I took the last room, I'm afraid."

decided against my practical suggestion the rain might have eased off."

Very smooth, yet she was tempted. After much experience she had evolved the notion that you should think everything but let no one suspect your thoughts. She sometimes wondered why it came so easy, but in that way common sense—or an instinct for self-preservation—decided your actions. No harm therefore in taking up his offer. "I could do with a Martini."

On trips to and from her house in the Haute-Loire she wiled away the miles with a fantasy of such a meeting, and now that something like it was happening she would drink her drink and get back into the weather. Fantasy was one thing, and reality another game altogether.

He eyed his *pastis* as if to make sure every swallow was worthy of the honour. His idea of paradise, he told her, was the smell of pine trees in the hottest sun, subtly mixed with odours of rosemary and olive, preferably while sitting on the terrace with his wife at midday, over a bottle of wine and a platter of dark bread and salami. Such an injection of relaxed living, at least once a year, was the best way he knew of keeping sane. In the afternoon—though he didn't do this far—he would dispatch the boys into the hills with map and compass, and a haversack of things to eat, so that he and Wendy could go to bed as in the days of their honeymoon.

He hoped that talking about himself would make her feel at ease, and not be so suspicious at what ought to seem his generosity in offering to share his room. "I'm a practical person, basically. I have to be, in my job, so it seems only logical to put the spare bed at your disposal."

She smiled at his good sense, good for him anyway, and, as if to confirm it, rain drummed more loudly at the windows. She asked herself, during the second Martini, what her thoughts would have been on passing him in the street, and decided she might have found him interesting enough to want to know more. She could even, in a certain mood, have "fancied" him. Such a judgment had no bearing, but the warmth within reddened her face.

He would have the advantage of a good story, if only to tell against himself, about how he had rescued this very personable woman in distress, and how correct in not trying to seduce her. "If you don't accept my suggestion, you leave me no alternative but to push on. I'll stop in a lay-by and sleep soundly at the wheel, more than happy in knowing you're well taken care of. Here's my key. I'll have a word with the clerk."

Occasional dips into the bread-and-

sausage bag along the way had left her famished, and the two Martinis, quickly drunk, were having an effect. Though his plan ought to be rejected in no uncertain manner, she heard herself say: "All right, I'll take it."

Such an adventure to look back on couldn't be bad: "This very kind chap actually gave up his room for me. Would you believe it? No, he wasn't *that* sort. He was such a gentleman that on thinking about it I rather wish he had been."

He put his glass down. "There's just one condition."

Oh, Lord, her grey eyes said, now I've dropped into it. Why are men always so shy? He probably plays chess. If he'd come straight out with it I'd at least know where I was.

"I can see what you're thinking."

There was too much triumph in his tone for her liking, but he probably knew that, too. She was ready to leave. "Am I so transparent?"

"Oh, no, nothing like that. I only want you to have dinner with me, before I ask the clerk to transfer the room. I always hate eating on my own in a strange place. I hope you won't take too long to decide, though, because here's the waiter coming to say our table's ready."

What am I doing?—he refilled her glass from the bottle of Côtes du Rhône—me, a supposedly respectable woman, getting into a situation like this? "My name's Margaret," she told him. Reasonably, he wanted to know about her, so what could she do but say she was a teacher at a girls' school? She couldn't think why such plain truth seemed so odd of place: "An aunt died and left me enough money to buy a small house near Le Puy. A cottage, really, but I don't imagine you can use such a word in France, can you? There was enough left over to buy a car, so I go there when I can."

On leaving, and putting the key under the earthen flowerpot outside the back door, she drove down the winding cobble track, with bushes scraping the car. On the main road she already thought of her flat in Ealing, and the cat her neighbour was looking after, though she was too much a lover of France not to enjoy the scenery before reaching the more rolling country of the north. "What delicious onion soup. I'm feeling better already. I was done for when I arrived."

"So I noticed." He wanted to touch her wrist, and say how sensible she had been in agreeing to stay, but held back in case she changed her mind.

A man and his *soumise* wife of 40-odd sat at the next table, and she saw him look at their slim daughter who had a

rather mousy helmet of hair but an exquisite bust. He was merely noting how each had a plate of open baked potato with grated cheese on top, the whole in a bed of curly lettuce. "They believe in a healthy diet," he said, seeing the waiter with his steak tartare and her platter of cutlets, "which seems a pity in France."

He leaned against the rail and levelled his binoculars, but it was hard to see the assembly lines of cars coming onto the boat, so he moved to the leading end, knowing he would curse himself for the rest of his life at not having stayed for breakfast. Hurry was in his bonemarrow, and it was impossible they would meet again. Unable to stop thinking of that warm and womanly figure under her clothes, he had passed half an hour in a lay-by hoping to see her tuppenny sardine-tin trundling along.

Five minutes to sailing, the ship loaded with trucks, buses, caravans and cars, he supposed it was too late now for her to make it. Maybe he would have a cup of coffee at Dover and wait to see if she was on the next boat.

There were moments on the hundred motorway miles to Calais when she forgot who she was, whereabouts she was, even what she was doing. Everything went, the brain went, the car went from around her. All protection went, but she came back to safety—thinking herself lucky—and ran once more through her adventure of the night.

The smell of wine on their combined breaths filling the shuttered and curtained room had not stopped them falling asleep almost immediately on their separate beds. In the middle of the night she was awakened by him going to the bathroom, flushing whatever it was, and washing his hands. Drifting back into sleep, and wishing it could happen

without embarrassment, she felt him beside her, and they moved against each other to find an even greater comfort than oblivion.

When she awoke, more raddled than after an insomniac few hours at the flat or cottage, he had gone, and his lack of politeness in not saying goodbye so that she could at least thank him properly left a sense of injury which did not dissipate on finding another of his cards with "Thank you for everything" scrawled on the back. At breakfast she felt as if half of herself was missing; the only advantage in being so shamefully maudlin was that maybe he was in the same state.

She made a stupid blunder in asking whether the bill had been paid, as if a man she had picked up had left her to do it. A bit more know-how would have saved her a funny look from the clerk. Carrying her overnight bag to the car, she wondered how far, or if at all, a respectable woman could be called sophisticated. She had always had so many and such strident opinions as to how "men" ought to behave that she did not know to within any shade of accuracy what exactly "men" finally were. Well, now she did: a little more, anyway. They were all different, and he was the most different one she had known.

The motorway was visible for miles ahead under high-flowing clouds, the landscape hillier than she had previously noted. Every turn of the wheels brought the sea closer. A man who would use an offer to give up his room so as to get into her bed must be given top marks for ingenuity—and skill.

A postcard, in an envelope, to his business address, could do no harm—with her own locations firmly scripted in. When he next came up from Italy he might want to stay at her place overnight, an offer almost as good as his. And the detour shouldn't faze him □



ILLUSTRATIONS BY VICTOR ADRIEN

ON THE TRAIL OF ROBIN HOOD

For centuries ballads, plays, folk-tales and films have romanticised the character of the heroic outlaw. Graham Phillips attempts to separate the facts from the legends.

Every year tourists from all over the world flock to Nottingham on the trail of Robin Hood. The whole town hums with the legend; murals in the subways, statues in the squares, even the street names echo the tales of the Sherwood outlaw. So lucrative is the city's Robin Hood industry that a theme centre has been devoted exclusively to it. Passing through a Disneyland-style grotto, visitors are told of the swashbuckling adventures immortalised on film by Errol Flynn, Richard Greene and Kevin Costner. This is the Robin Hood the world has come to know—the man in green tights.

It is hardly surprising that few scholars believe the tales to be based on fact, for nowhere in the records of Nottingham county do we find a historical Robin Hood. If he existed during the 1190s, the time of Prince John and Richard the Lionheart, then the sheriff of Nottingham ought surely to have provided us with evidence. However, Edmund Deyncourt, sheriff at the time, leaves no record of ever having engaged a Sherwood-based outlaw band.

The theme for the Hollywood epics

portraying Robin as a disinherited nobleman originated in 1598 with the Elizabethan playwright Anthony Munday. Contemporary with the works of Shakespeare, Munday's play *The Downfall of Robert, Earle of Huntington* was performed at the Globe theatre and proved as popular as Shakespeare's works, ensuring the survival of the Sherwood Forest version of the story to the present day.

But Munday did not invent the outlaw. More than 200 years earlier William Langland wrote in his poem "Piers Plowman", "I can the rymes of Robyn Hode". Unfortunately, Langland tells us no more, and no trace has been found of the rhymes he refers to.

The first known tales of Robin Hood were written after Langland's time during the 15th century, in the form of ballads by unknown minstrels. Picked up and performed by travelling players, the songs carried the story of the Merry Men of Sherwood throughout England.

The earliest of all the Robin Hood ballads, preserved in part in the British Library, is "A Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode". Written around 1400, two centuries before Anthony Munday's play, it

recounts a different story altogether, in which Robin is portrayed not as a disinherited earl but as a yeoman, a salt-of-the-earth peasant who has taken up arms against the authorities. Furthermore, although the "Geste" Robin is involved in a dispute with the sheriff of Nottingham, this character does not originate from that city. In one verse he introduces himself to other outlaws by saying, "I am Robin of Barnsdale fair".

Barnsdale was a forested area of south Yorkshire, lying between Doncaster and Ferrybridge, almost 50 miles to the north of Nottingham. (The name was in use as late as 1806 and is still preserved in Barnsdale Bar, at the southern boundary of the district.) The "Geste" provides further evidence for this being the setting of the original tale. In one of the opening verses Robin says to Little John:

"And walke up to Saylis
And so to Watlinge Street
And wait after some unkneth gest
Up chance ye may them mete."

Sayles Plantation, in Wentbridge, about 2 miles north of Barnsdale Bar, still affords a clear view of the bridge where the Great North Road crossed the river

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: THE ADVENTURE TRAIL OF ROBIN HOOD; MANDALAY ARTISTS





In *Robin Hood* (1922) Douglas Fairbanks Sr played him as a romantic swashbuckler.

Went. (Watling Street, the name for the Roman road between London and north Wales, was also applied to the Great North Road, which ran through Barnsdale during the Middle Ages.) The author of the "Geste" clearly knew this area; he actually describes Little John as looking down "into Barnsdale". From the high ground of Sayles, the view down into the Went valley is little altered today.

Familiarity with Barnsdale is also echoed in the other 15th-century ballads, almost all of which set the story in this vicinity. In "Robin Hood and the Potter", written about 1500, Little John encounters the potter at Wentbridge. In "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne", composed about 1475, Little John is captured in Barnsdale, while Robin again introduces himself as "Robin Hood of Barnsdale". In only one of the early ballads is Robin associated with Sherwood.

Throughout England hundreds of landmarks, both natural and artificial, bear the name of Robin Hood; once again, the earliest is recorded in Barnsdale. A deed from Monk Bretton Priory of 1422, almost three centuries before the oldest surviving record links anything in Sherwood Forest with the outlaw's name, mentions a Robin Hood's Stone which marked a field boundary about a mile to the south of Barnsdale Bar. Its site is probably Robin Hood's Well (now covered by an 18th-century folly), past which ran the Great North Road—today the A1 trunk road. This Doncaster-to-Ferrybridge section is where the Robin Hood of the original legend is said to have robbed wealthy merchants who travelled from London to York.

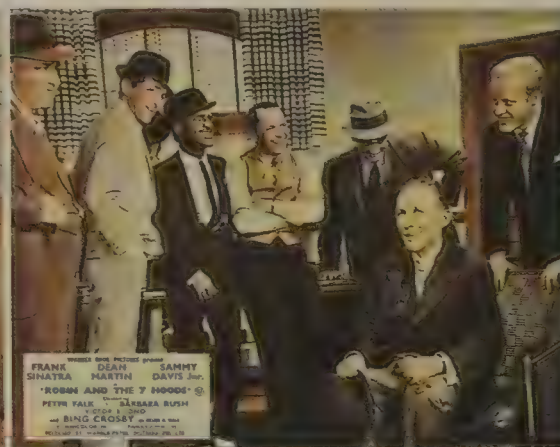
So, in spite of the popularity of Anthony Munday's play causing successive novelists to link Robin with Sherwood Forest and Nottingham, the origins of the character appear to be set firmly in

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PHOTOGRAPHS FROM RONALD GRANT ARCHIVE



Richard Todd in *The Story of Robin Hood and his Merry Men*.



In *Robin and the Seven Hoods* Frank Sinatra led a gang in 1928 Chicago.



Disney's 1973 cartoon *Robin Hood* cast a crafty fox in the title role.

Barnsdale. Moreover the oldest reference to Robin Hood by someone who considered him to have been a historical figure places him in this same location. In 1420 the Scottish chronicler Andrew de Wyntoun wrote that Little John and Robin Hood had been renowned as Barnsdale outlaws.

The early ballads place not only Robin's life but also his demise in south Yorkshire rather than Nottingham. The "Geste's" final verses recount that Little John takes the wounded Robin to Kirklees Priory, seeking aid from the prioress. Little of this section of the song survives, and so the full story is a mystery. It is known that John departs, and that for some reason the prioress betrays Robin by sending word to his enemy, Sir Roger de Doncaster. However, before Sir Roger arrives, the prioress poisons the outlaw. Although he manages to slay Sir Roger, by the time Little John returns Robin is at death's door. The "Geste" ends with him asking Little John to bear him to his grave.

The hamlet of Kirklees is located some 20 miles west of Barnsdale; in woodland, just to the north, the foundation stones of the priory can still be seen. The traditional site of Robin Hood's grave also survives, a few hundred yards from the priory ruins. Although a monument now marks the spot, it was erected only in the 1840s by a local landowner, Sir George Armytage.

However, an earlier stone is recorded by Richard Grafton, king's printer to Edward VI, in the mid-16th century. At that time the inscription read: "Here lie Robert Hode, Willm Goldburgh, Thomas . . ." The rest was even then obliterated. Exactly who William Goldburgh and Thomas were has long been forgotten. Robin was, and still is, a nickname for Robert. Could this Hode have been the basis for the legend?

Although the early ballads recount where Robin Hood was outlawed and



Kevin Costner: a Robin for the 1990s in *Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves*.

THE THEME FOR THE HOLLYWOOD EPIC ORIGINATED WITH AN ELIZABETHAN PLAYWRIGHT.



John Derek, as son of Robin, in *Rogues of Sherwood Forest*.



Sean Connery and Audrey Hepburn rekindle romance in *Robin and Marian*.



where he supposedly died, they fail to suggest a place of birth or, more importantly, dates for the events. Contrary to the modern story, they neither give Robin's birthplace as Locksley, nor locate him during the reign of Richard the Lionheart.

The popular period for the later Robin Hood tales appears to derive from the Scottish author John Major, in 1512. Convinced that Robin was a historical figure, Major dated his activities to 1193 and 1194, when Richard I was held captive in Germany. Although Major's date gained general acceptance, it was never reinforced by argument or proof. The place of birth was an even later addition to the Robin Hood myth when, in 1795, the antiquary Joseph Ritson stated, without producing evidence, that Robin Hood was born in Locksley (known today as Loxley), in Yorkshire.

Although the "Geste" fails to give dates, it does provide an important clue to the period in which the story is set and once again contradicts the popular version. The monarch of the ballad is not called Richard, but "Edwarde, our comly kynge". So, almost 200 years before the story of Robin and Richard the Lionheart became famous, Robin was located in a different historical period. But which King Edward was the "comly kynge"?

In 1852 the Yorkshire antiquary Joseph Hunter published his appraisal of the "Geste" and other early Robin Hood legends. He pointed out that in the ballad the king offers Robin an amnesty during a tour, or royal progress, taking him through the forests of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and then to Nottingham. As Hunter discovered that only one such journey had been



Top, Wentbridge, in Yorkshire: near here Robin Hood is said to have robbed merchants travelling between London and York.

Above, the church at Woolley, near Wakefield, where Robert Hode married Matilda.

THROUGHOUT ENGLAND HUNDREDS OF LANDMARKS BEAR THE NAME OF ROBIN HOOD.

historically recorded, between April and November, 1323, during the reign of Edward II, he began his search here for the man behind the legend.

Edward II made his royal progress to regain support after a revolt led by his cousin Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. Following his defeat at the battle of Boroughbridge in March the previous year, Lancaster had stood trial at Pontefract Castle and been condemned to death for treason, while many of his outlawed followers had fled to the safety of Barnsdale Forest. However, by 1323 the king faced other enemies and required the rebels' support. Hunter therefore concluded that the historical

Robin Hood must have been one of the Lancastrian outlaws granted amnesty by the king.

After searching the records of Lancaster's estate, the manor of Wakefield (some 10 miles from Barnsdale), Hunter discovered a Robert Hode listed as a tenant during the first two decades of the 14th century. The manor rolls (contemporary local records) show that in 1314 Robert Hode married Matilda, daughter of estate warden Hugh de Toothill, and occupied a cottage in the nearby village of Bichill. As for military service, Robert was twice summoned to fight the Scots, in 1316 and 1317. Unfortunately, no record concerning Lord Lancaster's call to arms in 1322 has survived, but as an experienced soldier Robert would almost certainly have been included.

Although there was no further record of Robert Hode, there is additional evidence to support Joseph Hunter's theory that he and the legendary Robin were the same. According to the "Geste", 24 years after having been granted amnesty by the king, Robin (once more an outlaw) is wounded and taken by Little John to Kirklees Priory, where the unnamed prioress agrees to shelter the outlaw because he is, in some way, her kin.

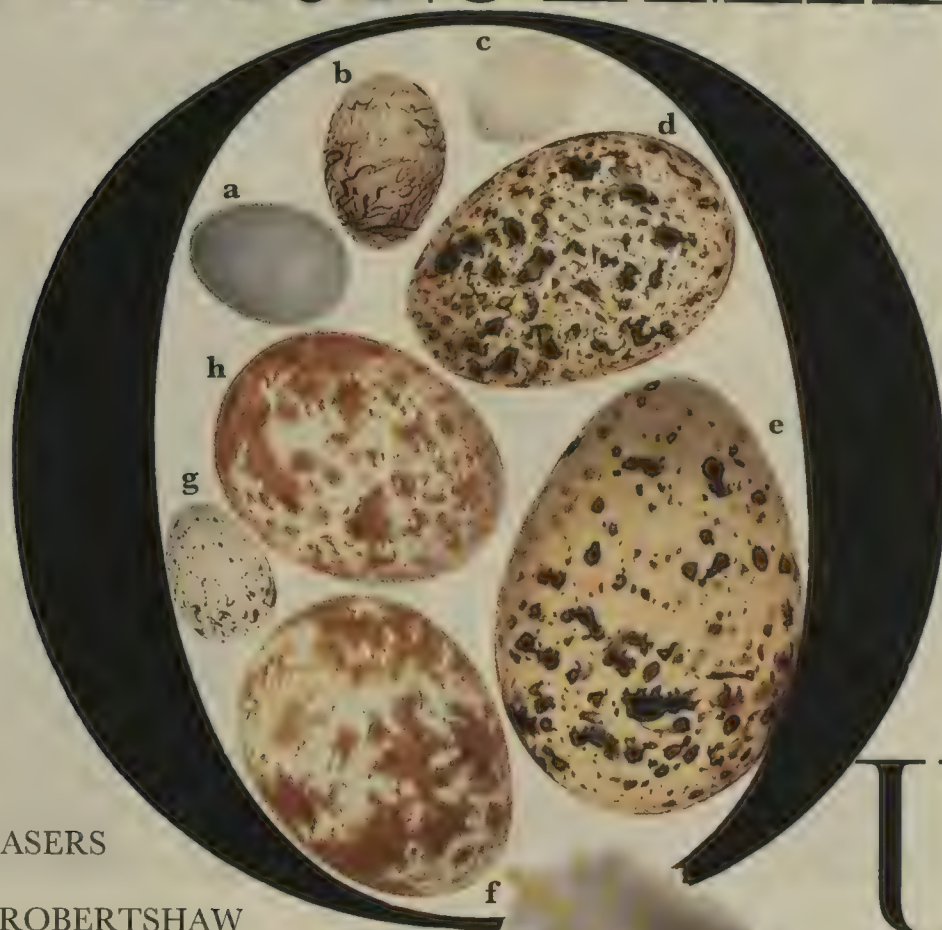
It seems that, like Robin, Robert Hode of Wakefield was indeed related to the prioress of Kirklees. In 1347, 24 years after Robin's amnesty, the prioress is recorded in the ecclesiastical archives of York (still preserved at York Minster) as Elizabeth de Staynton, daughter of John de Staynton of Bichill. John de Staynton had died in 1293, and the following year the Wakefield manor rolls record the marriage of his widow Joan to Hugh de Toothill. Hugh de Toothill was Matilda's father, making Elizabeth Robert's sister-in-law.

Was Robert Hode of Wakefield really the Robin Hood portrayed in the "Geste"? There are certainly outstanding parallels between the two. Robert was alive at the time of the events in the ballad, he came from the district of Barnsdale, he was probably outlawed after the Lancastrian revolt, and was related to the Kirklees prioress.

Yet tourists in search of Robin Hood will no doubt continue to flock to Nottingham—ironic, when a grave with such a claim to authenticity should lie overgrown and forgotten more than 50 miles away in a remote stretch of Yorkshire woodland.

As for the legend of Robin, Maid Marian, the Merry Men, the feud with the sheriff of Nottingham and the robbing of the rich to give to the poor—whether it is fact, fiction, or something in between may never be known □

CHRISTMAS



A BATTERY
OF BRAINTEASERS
BY URSULA ROBERTSHAW

UIZ

A Allocate the eight eggs pictured above to the appropriate British birds shown in the photographs



1 Kestrel



2 Swallow



3 Wren



4 Oyster-catcher



5 Sparrow-hawk



6 Redstart



7 Yellowhammer



8 Red grouse



B To which famous figures do the hands that feature in the photographs shown above belong?

C What is the meaning of these first names?

- 1 David
- 2 Sophronia
- 3 Margaret
- 4 Nathaniel
- 5 Aaron
- 6 Deborah
- 7 Vincent
- 8 Absalom

D For what do the following abbreviations stand?

- 1 Unicef
- 2 laser
- 3 MASH
- 4 AGR
- 5 FOREST
- 6 SPQR
- 7 Pep
- 8 Ernie

E Put these events in date order.
 Iranian Islamic revolution, republic established under Ayatollah Khomeini
 Six-Day War, between Israel and Arab states
 Turkish invasion of Cyprus
 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait
 My Lai massacre
 Bay of Pigs invasion
 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia
 Ugandan civil war and defeat of Idi Amin's regime

F From which countries do cars bearing these index plates come?

- 1 FL
- 2 NL
- 3 ADN
- 4 BRN
- 5 PE
- 6 TR
- 7 WAN
- 8 RA

G What, in the language of flowers, do the following symbolise?

- 1 poppy
- 2 crocus
- 3 St John's wort
- 4 harebell
- 5 olive
- 6 maple

- 7 dianthus
- 8 ox-eye daisy

H

- 1 Who, in 1701, invented the mechanical seed-drill?
- 2 Who, in 1679, invented the pressure cooker?
- 3 What great civil engineering work was completed and opened in 1869?
- 4 Who, in 1909, were the first people to reach the North Pole?
- 5 Who, in 1927, found a single hominid tooth, first evidence of Peking Man, *Pithecanthropus pekinensis*?
- 6 What great change in the streets of London, the result of an invention by William Murdoch, first appeared in 1807?
- 7 What hazard to mariners did Robert Whitehead invent in 1866?
- 8 What happened at the Eniwetok Atoll in November, 1952?

I Name the capitals of these Indian states.

- 1 Bihar
- 2 Punjab
- 3 Gujarat
- 4 Madhya Pradesh
- 5 West Bengal

- 6 Rajasthan
- 7 Maharashtra
- 8 Tamil Nadu

J Who wrote the following?

- 1 Myra Breckinridge
- 2 The Girls of Slender Means
- 3 The Fall
- 4 Humboldt's Gift
- 5 The Executioner's Song
- 6 The Sea, the Sea
- 7 Eyeless in Gaza
- 8 Armadale

K These are the last sentences of a number of well-known works of English literature. Can you identify them?

- 1 "Lying on the floor was a dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage. It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognised who he was."
- 2 "The light of one weak lamp in a rusty circle fell across the brick-heaps and the broken wood and the dust that had been houses once, where the small and hardly known and never-to-be-forgotten people of the dirty town had lived and loved and died and, always, lost."

3 "My husband remained there some time after me to settle our affairs, and at first I had intended to go back to him, but at his desire I altered that resolution, and he is come over to England also, where we resolve to spend the remainder of our years in sincere penitence for the wicked lives we have lived."

4 "Yet this inconstancy is such,
 As you too shall adore;
 I could not love thee (Dear
 so much,
 Lov'd I not honour more."

5 "He tried tentatively a phrase, 'My dear, my dear, I am so happy,' and heard with infinite tenderness her prompt and guarded reply, 'Me too.' It seemed to him that after all one could exaggerate the value of happiness..."

6 "He left alone creeds and systems of philosophy, finding enough and more than enough to occupy his tongue in the opinions and actions common to all good men. Some believed him, and some believed not; some said that his words were commonplace, others complained of his want of theological doctrine; while others again remarked that

it was well enough for a man to take to preaching who could not see to do anything else. But everywhere he was kindly received, for the story of his life had become generally known."

7 "This England never did, nor never shall,
 Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,
 But when it first did help to wound itself.
 Now these her princes are come home again,
 Come the three corners of the world in arms,
 And we shall shock them:
 Nought shall make us rue,
 If England to itself do rest but true."

L On which works of literature are the following operas based?

- 1 Lucia di Lammermoor
- 2 Luisa Miller
- 3 La fanciulla del West
- 4 Albert Herring
- 5 Lulu
- 6 Gianni Schicchi
- 7 La Bohème
- 8 Rigoletto
- 9 The Cunning Little Vixen

Answers on page 81.

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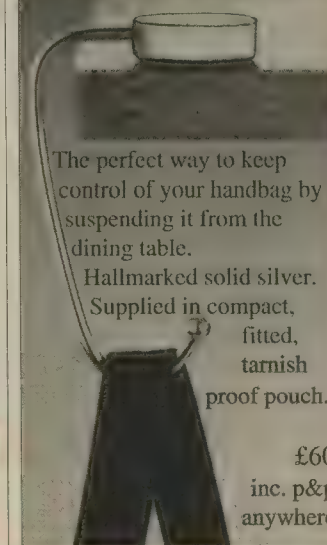
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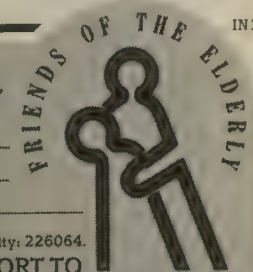
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A PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE

Harrods food department will provide you with dressed partridges along with a hamper containing everything you need to create an alternative to the usual turkey Christmas dinner. A four-person wicker hamper costing between £80 and £100 (depending on size of birds) would include four fresh partridges, quails' eggs, game sauce, apple-and-sage stuffing, redcurrant jelly, game chips, elegant jars of sprouts, red cabbage and baby sweet corn, a bottle of Bordeaux, after-dinner mints and a packet of ground coffee. If you prefer, the hamper can be packed with a selection of delicious game pies, condiments and accompanying delicacies for around the same price. Partridge hampers, created for the *ILN*, are available by special order only. Contact Penny Walmsley, Gift Box Department, Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1 (071-730 1234, ext 3552), by November 20 for hampers to be delivered before Christmas.

Deep in Kent—the “garden of England”—you will find Brogdale Horticultural Trust, custodian of the national fruit collection. Five hundred varieties of pear include examples such as the Vicar of Winkfield—named after the incumbent of a Berkshire village, the Reverend W. L. Rham, who introduced this enormous French culinary pear to Britain in the early 19th century—as well as more familiar varieties such as Doyenné du Comice and Conference. Although the orchards, which abound with rare species of fruit trees, are at their most attractive in spring, Brogdale's shop is open to the public all year round. You could buy a pear tree to plant (from £8 to £14) or, for £15, enrol yourself and your true love as members of the trust, enabling you both to enjoy the programme of special events and instant arboreal advice on planting and propagation. Brogdale Horticultural Trust, Brogdale Road, Faversham, Kent (0795 535462). Shop open Saturday 10am-5pm.





TWO TURTLE DOVES

You have a good chance of spotting rather more than a pair of these pretty birds at Erddig, in Clwyd, on December 27 if you join in one of the post-Christmas walks organised by the National Trust and the Ramblers Association to counteract the after-effects of Yuletide indulgences. Another walk near a dovecote (unfortunately now unoccupied) is a 5-mile trek through the grounds of Calke Abbey, in Derbyshire (with a lunch stop at the encouragingly-named Staff of Life pub). Alternatively you could take a Bedfordshire ramble that starts from Willington Dovecote, which in its heyday was home to 1,500 pigeons.

Details of these and other walks (including forays in and around London) are available by sending an sae to the National Trust (Winter Events), 35 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1H 9AS (071-227 4933).

Turtle doves, herons and even kingfishers have been spotted on some stretches of the Grand Union Canal, which runs its navigable and leisurely way from London to Birmingham. The nearest place to London for hiring a canal narrowboat is Bridgewater Boats in Berkhamsted, where a colourful fleet of a dozen vessels, ranging in accommodation from four to eight berths and all named after T. S. Eliot cats, is maintained by Mike and Lindy Foster. Although they do not hire out boats in winter, they are holding two open days at the boatyard on December 27 and January 2, from 10am until 4pm, when the craft may be inspected and short trips to the nearest lock will be available. *Bridgewater Boats, Castle Wharf, Berkhamsted, Herts (0442 863615).*

THREE FRENCH HENS

You could eat some of these delectable birds in their native land during a luxurious new-year break in Paris. Look out of your bedroom window on to Place de la Concorde, wander through the Tuileries Gardens, shop in rue du Faubourg-St-Honoré or simply sit on the heated terrace of a café on the Champs-Élysées and watch the world go by. A two-night winter break at the celebrated Hôtel Crillon includes economy return flight, two nights' accommodation and a New Year's Eve dinner-dance in the hotel's three-Michelin-rosette restaurant, Les Ambassadeurs, at a cost of from £722 per person. *Abercrombie and Kent, Sloane Square House, Holbein Place, SW1 (071-730 9600).*



FOUR CALLING BIRDS

The London Zoo of the 1990s is committed to conserving the natural world by breeding endangered animals and by inspiring commitment to the conservation of wildlife and threatened habitats through education. You and your children will learn a lot and meet at least four calling birds at the Animals in Action show where Sam and Abby the colourful macaws, Max the eagle owl, assorted parakeets, barn owls, brown rats and a lemur are among the animals displaying their natural behaviour. After a walk through the aviary and around the reptile and elephant houses you can catch the feeding-times of pelicans and penguins. If you would like to support the zoo into the future, you can even adopt a calling bird. The sum of £20 sponsors a peacock or a kookaburra for a year; £60 will keep a parrot or a cockatoo in its accustomed style. (Benefits include a complimentary admission ticket.) For £15 you can join Lifewatch as a friend of the zoo and enjoy a year's unlimited admission. *London Zoo, Regent's Park, NW1 (071-722 3333). Daily 10am-4pm. Closed December 25.*

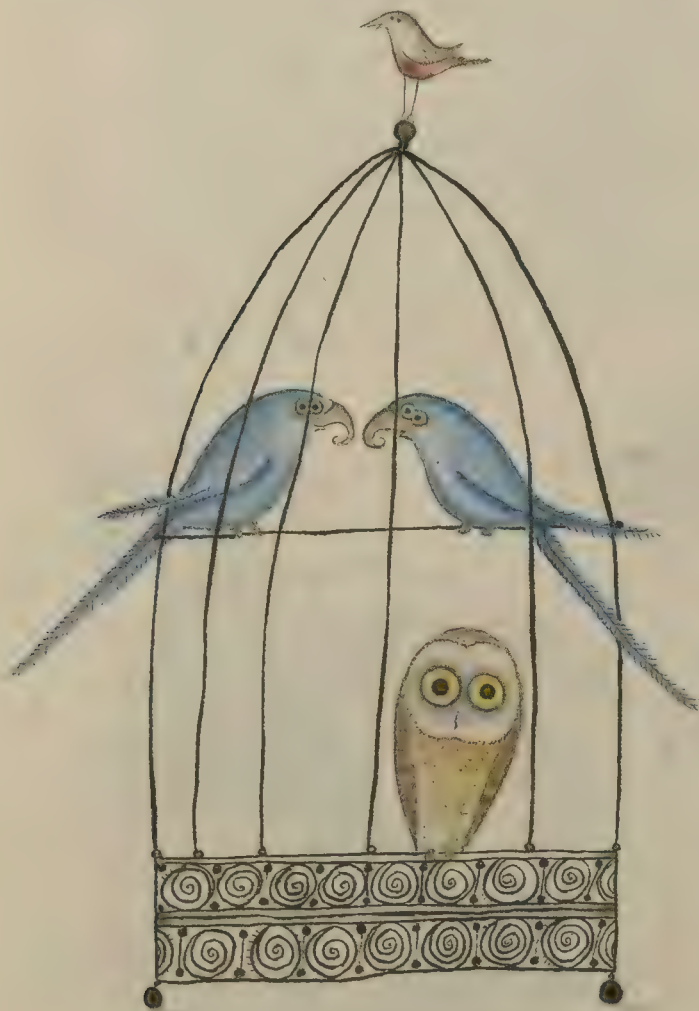
If you wake up on Boxing Day with a heavy heart because, in the flurry of preparing for Christmas, you missed all the carol concerts do not despair. Westminster Abbey is celebrating its Feast of Dedication with a candlelit carol service and procession at 3pm on Holy Innocents' Day (December 28). Everyone is welcome and no tickets are needed.



ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON

FIVE GOLD RINGS

As you stroll down Bond Street (decorated until Twelfth Night with garlands of lights and candelabra), you and your true love should have no difficulty in finding something with which to spoil each other. Asprey's will make, for the romantic, a Russian-style wedding ring with five bands in different colours of gold. Cartier has added a new design called Ellipse to its range of rings. These simple bands, available in pink, yellow or white gold, each set with a different stone, can be worn singly or next to each other—why not buy five? Tiffany, too, has a collection of rings set with precious stones that can be mixed and matched according to whim and budget. *Asprey, 165 New Bond Street, W1 (071-493 6767); Cartier, 175 New Bond Street, W1 (071-493 6962); Tiffany, 25 Old Bond Street, W1 (071-409 2790).*



SIX GEESE A-LAYING

Goose was the traditional bird of early-Victorian Christmas dinners and there are sure to be many pictorial representations of feasting at an exhibition to mark the 150th anniversary of the Christmas card at the Victoria and Albert Museum. The display features not only cards but also some of the paintings and drawings that inspired them.

The museum has been celebrating the centenary of Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit*, and currently has a display centred on another favourite story, *The Tailor of Gloucester*. The richly-embroidered clothes from the tailor's workshop, finished off by the mice, can be seen alongside Potter's sketches. Paintings of mice and of sewing tools and some early editions of the book provide a fascinating insight into the author's working methods.

Victoria and Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, SW7 (071-938 8500). Monday noon-5.50pm, Tuesday-Sunday 10am-5.50pm. The 150th anniversary of the Christmas card and The Tailor of Gloucester run until January 9.

SEE BEATRIX POTTER ON STAGE



JIMMY WORMSER

To complete the Beatrix Potter Christmas experience, the Royal Ballet is performing *Tales of Beatrix Potter*. Jemima Puddleduck, Peter Rabbit, Squirrel Nutkin and Jeremy Fisher are among the much-loved characters that spring to life in this enchanting work. *Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-240 1066/1911). Performances, November 20-January 8.*

SWAN OFF TO SEE THE COUNTRY WIFE AT STRATFORD



DONALD COOPER

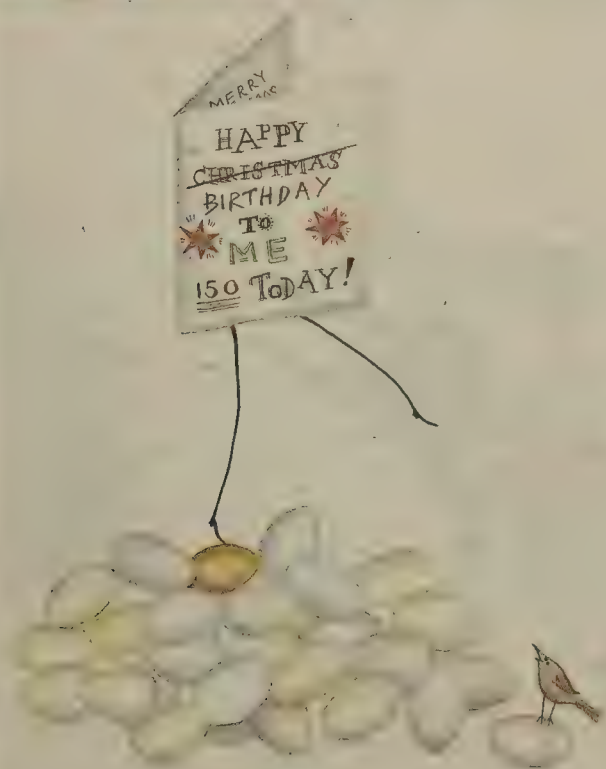
SEVEN SWANS A-SWIMMING

There are always plenty of these graceful birds paddling along the river in Stratford-upon-Avon. At the Royal Shakespeare Company's wooden-galleried Swan Theatre during the 12 days of Christmas you can choose from William Wycherley's Restoration comedy *The Country Wife*, T. S. Eliot's verse drama *Murder in the Cathedral*, Goldoni's comedy of mistaken identity *The Venetian Twins* and *Elgar's Rondo*, a new play by David Pownall about the great composer. In the company's main house you can see *The Tempest*, *King Lear*, *Love's Labour's Lost* or *The Merchant of Venice* and, in The Other Place, *Moby Dick* (Rod Wooden's new play from Herman Melville's novel) and Ibsen's *Ghosts*.

The RSC's Stop-Over packages give you one night's accommodation—ranging from a luxury hotel to a good bed-and-breakfast—a three-course dinner in the theatre's Box Tree restaurant either before or after the performance, and stalls or circle seats in one of the three theatres.

Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwicks (box office 0789 295623; Stop-Over packages 0789 414999).

If you fancy being in the swim, you can work up an appetite for Christmas dinner by dropping in on the annual Christmas Day race of the Serpentine Swimming Club in Hyde Park. It starts at 9am and culminates with a prize-giving ceremony.



EIGHT MAIDS A-MILKING

Vociferous protests from the resident goats mean that you can no longer have a go at milking them at Wimpole Hall Home Farm but there are plans for aspiring milkmaids (and their male counterparts) to be able to try their skill next year on a mechanical equivalent, complete with udders and milk. In the meantime, there is always plenty of animal husbandry in progress since Wimpole contains the largest collection of rare breeds of cattle, sheep and goats in East Anglia. The 18th-century Soane barn houses a museum of farm machinery; there are wagon rides, a children's adventure woodland, and teas in the Victorian stable block. *Wimpole Hall Home Farm, Arrington, near Royston, Herts (0223 207257). Saturday and Sunday 11am-4pm. Closed December 25 and 26.*

Visitors to Kentish Town City Farm, in north London, are welcome to watch Blossom, the Dairy Shorthorn, being milked—by machine rather than by rosy-cheeked milkmaid—at 9.30am and 4pm. There are 16 city farms in the capital alone, and more in Liverpool, Oxford, Nottingham, Peterborough, Southampton, Wakefield and other towns. A full list is obtainable from the National Federation of City Farms, AMF House, 93 Whitby Road, Brislington, Bristol BS4 3QF (0272 719109).

Kentish Town City Farm, 1 Cressfield Close, NW5 (071-916 5421). Tuesday-Sunday 9.30am-5.30pm. Closed December 25.

**NINE LADIES DANCING**

Considerably more ladies will be dancing in two different productions of *The Nutcracker* this year, one at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and the other across the river at the Festival Hall. The Royal Ballet's Covent Garden production boasts some amazing magical effects including swirling snowflakes, a flying sleigh and a spectacular, growing Christmas tree. Over on the South Bank English National Ballet estimates that it will drop no fewer than two million snowflakes during the 12 days of Christmas and is set to offer just as much excitement: flying pastry-cooks, and a variety of mice ranging from giant, seven-headed monsters to a smaller, but radio-controlled, rodent.

Royal Ballet, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-240 1066/1911), performances December 17-January 10; English National Ballet, Festival Hall, South Bank Centre (071-928 8800), performances December 22-January 22.



TEN LORDS A-LEAPING

After all the indulgences of Christmas eating, be a Lord (or Lady) of the Dance and leap into the new year. Pineapple Dance Studios have classes to fulfil your every dancing fantasy. Tap for the would-be Fred Astaires, ballet for the Rudolf Nureyevs, jazz for the Gene Kellys and contemporary dance or American funk and jazz for the John Travoltas. There are also classes in yoga, step aerobics, and various fat-burning and soul-enhancing workouts. Daily membership costs £4 (or £65 yearly) plus a fee for each class of from £4.

Pineapple Dance Studios: 7 Langley Street, WC2 (071-836 4004) and 38 Harrington Road, SW7 (071-581 0466).

If you want to spot some real lords a-leaping, you could join the LivingWell Premier health club in Millbank, just opposite the Palace of Westminster, and maybe tone up beside the odd peer or two returning to Westminster after the Christmas break. The Living Well offers a full range of exercise classes, a pool, sauna, Jacuzzi, steam rooms, a shop, a health bar for a quick snack, and a beauty salon as well as advice on diet and healthy living. There is a joining fee starting at £275, with monthly dues of from £40 per person.

LivingWell Premier, 4 Millbank, SW1 (071-233 3579).

HUNT FOR TREASURE AT LEEDS CASTLE**ELEVEN PIPERS PIPING**

Hogmanay should really be celebrated in Scotland, but you can catch a Scottish flavour on New Year's Eve without travelling north of the border. Leeds Castle, in Kent, is staging an extravaganza of an evening—complete with bagpiper—that starts with cocktails and a six-course dinner. Included in the £85 ticket price are live entertainment (highland and traditional), piping in the haggis and the whisky nip served after a recitation of Burns's famous "Address to the Haggis". Revellers can trip the light fantastic until 2am. Stay near by with the children and take in the castle's New Year's Day treasure hunt. Intriguing clues and quiz questions will lead competitors around the grounds, with prizes for winners. Hot soup, mulled wine and mince pies will ward off the cold.

Leeds Castle, near Maidstone, Kent (0622 765400).

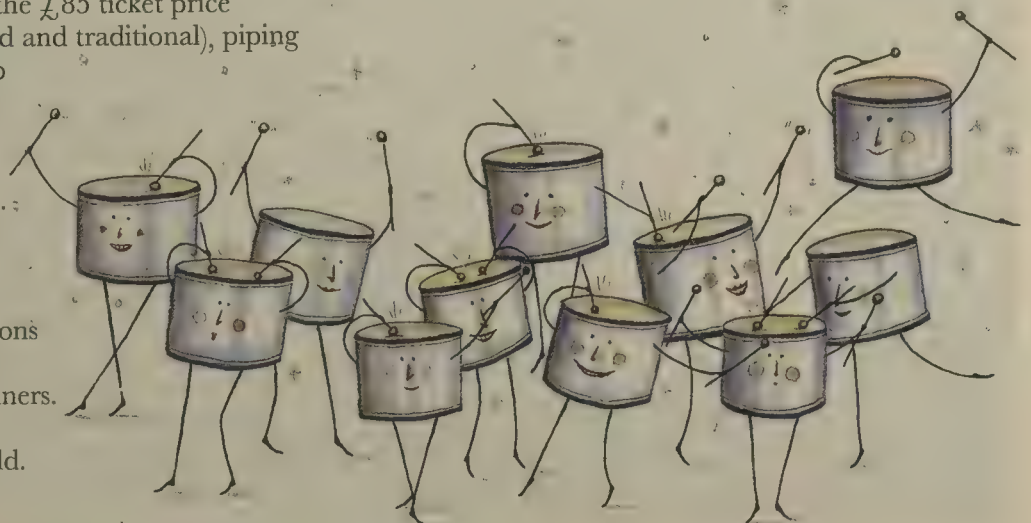
**TWELVE DRUMMERS DRUMMING**

Everyone loves a parade and on New Year's Day the Lord Mayor of Westminster's American-style spectacle will have 7,000 musicians, dancers, acrobats, cheerleaders, clowns and floats making their merry way at noon from Parliament Square to The Mall via Whitehall, Trafalgar Square, Lower Regent Street, Piccadilly, Hyde Park Corner and Constitution Hill. Led by the lord mayor, bands from more than 10 American states will be joined by members of Gerry Cottle's Circus, pearly kings and queens, giant inflatables, the Essex Dog Display Team and performing groups from six countries to usher in the new year with a flourish. Take the whole family and enjoy the enthusiasm and goodwill of this fresh-air international event.

Further details from 081-566 8586.

The Museum of London is drumming up some celebratory events in the manner enjoyed by some of the capital's diverse religious and ethnic communities. Let's Celebrate, a series of festivities which continues until January 2, includes Caribbean story-telling, Chinese music, Jewish stories for Hanukkah, and Indian puppets for Diwali. Special teas and refreshments of appropriate style will be available on each occasion.

Full programme from Museum of London, London Wall, EC2 (071-600 3699).



IN SEARCH OF THE IDEAL HAM



Michael Raffael finds that a simple way of preserving pork has created a meat full of intensely local character.

That of York and Virginia is rose-petal pink. In Alsace it is baked in a golden pastry crust. Westphalians dish it up accompanied by pumpernickel and foaming jugs of beer. In the Ardennes forests they smoke it on the Belgian side of the border, but not on the French side. At Jabugo, in Andalusia, they slice it wafer-thin as the Italians do at Parma and San Daniele.

Any unashamed trencherman has at least one fond memory of this delicious meat. Charles Dickens, in *Barnaby Rudge*, cited breakfast at the Maypole Hotel, Chigwell: "The board creaked beneath the weight of a jolly round of beef, a ham of the first magnitude, and sundry towers of Yorkshire cake." Writing in wartime Britain, the American author Frederick Philip Stieff, pined for the Maryland hams of Mr and Mrs J. Spence Howard: "I have always maintained that the Spences' pigs were the direct lineal descendants of the pigs that the cavaliers of the *Ark* and the *Dove*—among them the *Howards*—brought over with them." And, finally, there is the festive menu that René Roussin, chef to King George VI, served to the royal family for Christmas, 1937. There was, of course, the turkey, but the buffet included a boar's head, ox tongue, sirloin of beef, terrines of pheasant, hare and partridge, chicken, game and, as the *pièce de résistance*, a York ham.

The first detailed recipe for curing legs of pork appeared in a short farming treatise, written about 200bc, by the Roman politician Cato the Censor. He describes how to pack the meat in salt, wipe, air-dry, oil, smoke, sponge with vinegar and then store it in a meat safe. The techniques have barely changed.

However, although some of today's hams are made by craftsmen who respect traditions and produce a delicacy

still worthy of any patrician's table, others are little more than wedges of pig-meat, pumped full of polyphosphate solution or swimming in a gelatinised exudate, which betray the name of ham.

York ham, for instance, has been a victim of its international reputation. French *charcutiers* sell *jambon d'York* which owes little to Yorkshire's Large White pigs and even less to the Minster city. Nowadays, within its medieval walls, G. Scott is the only remaining butcher to cure and mature hams. Visitors to York have been praising the city's hams for three centuries, but the trade would not have existed in its present form without the good graces of a Victorian weaver from nearby Keighley. Joseph Tuley bred pigs to eke out his earnings. He walked, washed, scratched and combed his favourite sow, *Matchless*, to such good effect that he finished up improving the breed. The sow's progeny became the basis for the Yorkshire Large White and hams from Tuley's bacon pigs could weigh upwards of 25lb. Their size caught the consumer's imagination. The sporting public who descended on York for the horse-racing would pass shop-windows in which these monsters were hanging and grocers and butchers did a brisk trade in ham sandwiches and whole hams.

The original York hams are said to have been smoked with wood shavings from beams used in the building of the Minster. However, if that were true it would refer to a different kind of ham from another era. Despite statements in Larousse and elsewhere, today's version dispenses with smoke and relies on maturation for its gamey flavour.

Smoking was common practice in England when the Pilgrim Fathers set out for the New World. Along with their Bibles, they took their curing skills and an appetite for bacon. The settlers fed

their pigs on maize and peanuts and, after slaughtering them, they smoked the various cuts over fires of maple, walnut or corn husks. This combination of diet and cure gave the meat the rich, luscious flavour associated with Virginia hams. Today the best of these are the Smithfield hams that take their name from a small town near the mouth of the James river. The razorback pigs first range free in the woods and are then turned into the peanut fields before being finished on corn. The meat is smoked over fragrant hickory and apple wood then cooked and often coated in a sweet glaze.

Except for its shape, it is hard to believe that a golden, clove-studded Virginia ham gracing a festive Thanksgiving table could come from the same beast as the Spanish *jamón serrano* (mountain ham). Somewhere along the evolutionary road their paths seem to have split. And yet the finest air-dried Jabugo, the king of *serranos*, made from the grey-blue *pata negra* pigs that roam the slopes of the Sierra Morena fattening on acorns, is another of the world's great delicacies. Like the product of Parma, Jabugo is not cooked. The intense depth of flavour comes from 18 months' aging in cellars. During this period the ham, the rind of which has been first removed, acquires an ash-like overcoat of *Penicillium roqueforti* and *Penicillium notatum* moulds. These not only contribute to its aroma but also help the fats to seep back into the flesh, covering it with the characteristic tracery of marbling.

This never occurs with Parma ham since its rind is left on and the exposed fat protected during its long maturing process by the application of a paste made from lard, flour and seasonings. The growth in popularity of this Italian ham has been spectacular. Between



BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY



Ham is often the centrepiece of the festive table, above, from those of royalty to the simpler homes of country people, where it can be a point of honour to cure home-grown pork to traditional recipes. Hams from Joseph Tuley's Large White pigs, left, could weigh 25lb and were popular with York racegoers a century ago.



MURTON BRELST

1950 and 1980 the numbers of *prosciutti di Parma* produced rose from 500,000 to eight million a year.

San Daniele, a rival of Parma ham, is produced in the region of Friuli, between Venice and the Austrian border. Since they are pressed half-way through the salting process, the hams of San Daniele are flatter than those of Parma and roughly guitar-shaped in appearance. Despite the industrial scale of their manufacture (200 curing factories line the valleys of the Parma, Baganza and Taro rivers), an immense amount of care is lavished on both types. It is still a point of honour among farmers in northern Italy, especially in Emilia-Romagna, to cure their home-produced pork and prepare their own *cotechini* and salami sausages.

The French *jambons de campagne* have

also stayed true to their rustic roots and each region has its own method of curing. In Auvergne smoked hams can weigh as much as 50lb. The Dordogne pigs are smaller; the cure is milder and includes juniper berries and thyme. Ardennes pigs are fed on apples, pears and plums. In Franche-Comté the hams are smoked and dried under a *tué*, a wooden pyramid sticking out of the farmhouse roofs. The Bayonne hams rely for their flavour on salt from Salies-de-Béarn. Basques rub their *chingara* with red pimiento powder.

From Westphalia and Prague to Zhejiang and Yunnan, from Ireland to the Transvaal, pigs are being raised for turning into hams. The trick of preserving pork by curing has, over the centuries, become a living part of many nations' cultural history.

MAKING THE MOST OF HAM

SERRANO HAM WITH STRAWBERRIES

Parma ham with melon or figs are well-known combinations. Try this for a change.

9oz/250g *serrano* ham, very finely sliced

14oz/400g large strawberries

1tbsp caster sugar

juice of half a lemon

freshly ground black pepper

Arrange the ham on four plates. Quarter or halve the strawberries. Place in a bowl and sprinkle sugar over them, then squeeze on a drop or two of lemon juice. Grind black pepper over the top and turn the mixture gently, like a salad. Spoon onto the plates, alongside the ham.

Serves four.

JAMBON PERSILLÉ

Burgundians believe that their classic recipe started out as a way to use up left-overs. Although some versions are still made from odd scraps of ham chopped up with parsley and held together by aspic jelly, at its best this is a much more sophisticated dish.

4½lb/2kg uncooked York or Virginia ham (rind on)

2 pigs' trotters, split

2 onions, each stuck with a clove

2 large carrots, scraped

large bouquet garni (1 stick celery, parsley stalks, thyme and 1 bayleaf)

1 tsp black peppercorns

1 cup dry white wine (ideally a Chardonnay like Petit Chablis or Auxey-Duresses)

2tbsp *marc de Bourgogne* (or cognac)

For the jelly

1 garlic clove, crushed

2 shallots, finely diced

2tbsp chopped parsley

2tbsp chopped chervil

Soak the ham overnight in plenty of water. Drain it and put it into a pan of water. Bring to the boil and simmer 20 minutes. Drain it again. Return it to the pan with trotters, vegetables, bouquet garni, peppercorns, wine and enough water to cover. Simmer for 20 minutes per lb. (It is important not to let the liquid bubble.) Let the ham cool in the liquor. Skim off any fat from the surface. (Perfectionists can trail kitchen paper across to mop up any fatty slicks remaining.)

Strain the cooking liquid through a cloth into a clean pan and boil until it is reduced to a generous pint. Cool, but not enough to set it. Add the *marc* or



ROGER STOWELL

cognac. Remove the rind and most of the fat from the ham and cut the meat into cubes.

Ladle a little of the cooled liquid into a large bowl or terrine. Mix the garlic, shallots and herbs together and sprinkle about a tablespoon of the mixture on the almost-jellified base. Cover with a layer of ham. Sprinkle more herbs on the ham and moisten with the jellied stock. Continue layering herbs and ham until they have been used up. Press and level the surface. Pour any remaining stock over the ham. Refrigerate until set.

To serve, turn out on a dish or slice it direct from the terrine.

Serves 12.

PIPERADE

This Basque speciality can be made either as an omelette or as something like scrambled eggs. My personal preference is for something in between, but, in either case, good Bayonne ham is the secret. Curiously enough, it is not made in that town but is a designation for hams made south of the river Adour, in other words throughout the Basque country.

4 mixed sweet peppers

2fl oz/50ml olive oil

4oz/100g sliced onion

1 crushed clove garlic

1½lb/675g sun-ripened tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped

½ chilli pepper, seeded and diced

fresh basil leaves

salt

6-8 eggs

1½oz/40g goose fat (or butter)

4 slices Bayonne ham

Char the pepper skins under a grill or over a direct flame. Put in a paper bag and allow to steam for a few minutes. Peel off the skins. Remove cores and slice.

Heat the oil in a pan. Sauté the onion slices gently until soft but

not browned. Add garlic, tomato, chilli and the sliced peppers. Stew for about 30 minutes over a gentle flame until most excess moisture has evaporated and the vegetables are well-cooked. Stir in the basil leaves (tear if using large ones) and season generously with salt.

Beat the eggs. Heat the fat or butter in a large frying-pan over a moderate flame. Stir in the eggs and turn down the heat. When the egg mixture just starts to set on the bottom of the pan, turn it over and continue to cook until almost set, but fold in the vegetables before it does so.

Arrange the ham slices on four plates, and spoon the *pipérade* mixture alongside them. Another variation is to cut the ham into strips and mix it into the *pipérade* at the last moment.

Serves four.

HAM BAKED IN HAY

This is one of the cross-over points which show that the differences between English and French country cooking are not so marked after all. It should be made only with sweet-smelling, new-mown hay gathered from a field that has not been treated with any pesticides. Although the dish is not a complicated one, you may find it easier to work with a gammon weighing 3 to 4kg or with half a ham, either of which is more likely to fit into a domestic saucepan.

1 ham or gammon, preferably smoked

hay, an armful

spring water to cover

Soak the ham for 24 hours and then rinse. Put a layer of hay in the bottom of the pan. Lay the ham on it and pack more hay all around. Cover with water and simmer gently for 20 minutes per lb or, more accurately, to an

internal temperature of 69°C (160°F) measured by a meat thermometer or probe.

Take the meat from the pan, peel off the rind and carve thick slices. Serve with new potatoes, a salad and a slightly chilled Beaujolais *cru*.

Serves a varying number, depending on the size of ham. Allow 9oz (250g) per person.

GLAZED HAMS

There are many different glazes for a freshly cooked ham: cider, fruit juice, marmalade, honey and treacle to name just a few.

large ham

Some suggested glazes

5oz/150g soft brown sugar, 5oz/150g liquid honey, 4fl oz/100ml sweet cider.

5oz/150g dark brown sugar, 5oz/150g liquid honey, 1tbsp English mustard, 3fl oz/75ml dry white wine, 1fl oz/25ml orange juice.

6oz/175g traditional marmalade, melted with a little water and strained.

2tbsp finely ground coffee, 4tbsp soft brown sugar, 1tsp English mustard (an Edwardian favourite).

cloves for studding ham (optional)

Soak the ham in several changes of water for at least 24 hours longer if it weighs more than 5kg (11lb). Transfer it to a pan of cold water, bring to the boil and simmer for roughly 20 minutes per lb or to an internal temperature of 69°C (160°F).

Remove meat from liquid and pare away the rind. Score the outer fat with a diamond pattern. Melt the chosen glaze ingredients together and brush over the fat. Stud with cloves if you are using them. Put the ham on a trivet in a roasting-tin and bake for 30 minutes at 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5, basting once or twice.

Serve hot or cold □



MARIN BREISE

HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS

*A selection of diminutive gift ideas,
photographs by Michelle Garrett.*

*Traditional, but tiny,
some of the most
covetable presents will
be nestling in
the smallest packages.*

DETAILS OF GOODS ON THESE PAGES ARE GIVEN OVERLEAF. ALL ITEMS SHOWN ACTUAL SIZE.



Previous pages; numbers as key below right.

1 *The Teeny Weeny Cat Book* and *Little Kitten Book*, both by Martin Leman, Pelham Books, £2.99.

2 Silver mouse, £16. Bruford & Heming, 28 Conduit Street, W1 (071-629 4289).

3 Rabbit herald, from a range of articulated *Alice in Wonderland* characters, £13.39. The Dolls House, 29 The Market, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-379 7243).

4 Miniature hamper, £12.84; Christmas delicacies, £2.36-£16.45. The Dolls House.

5 Reproduction tin of chocolate pastilles, £4.20. Carluccio's, 28A Neal Street, WC2 (071-240 1487).

6 Hand-made wooden rocking-horse, £198. The Dolls House.

7 Silver shell perfume bottle, £95. Penhaligon's, 41 Wellington Street, WC2 (071-836 2150), and branches.

8 Silver pincushions: pig, £30; bear, £45. Bruford & Heming.

9 Teapot, complete with dormouse (not shown), £12.10. The Dolls House.

10 Wooden, 99-piece jigsaw puzzle, £6.95, plus p & p. ChildLine Brainwaves catalogue, Freepost SU361, Department 5317, Hendon Road, Sunderland, SR9 9AD (091-514 4666).

11 Chess set with metal pieces, £8.05. The Dolls House.

12 Silver sovereign perfume bottle, £95. Penhaligon's.

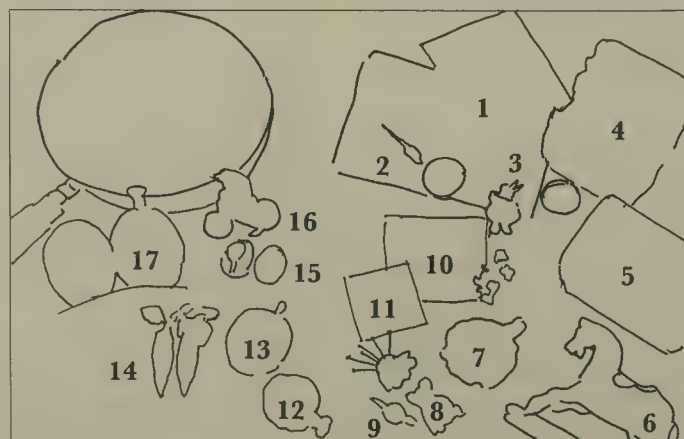
13 18th-century miniature, £8,800. D. S. Lavender, 16B Grafton Street, W1 (071-629 1782).

14 18-carat gold pea-pod brooch with malachite peas, £4,725. Tiffany & Co, 25 Old Bond Street, W1 (071-409 2790).

15 18th-century portrait ring, £1,500. D. S. Lavender.

16 Silver French-onion-seller frog, £105. Hennell, 12 New Bond Street, W1 (071-629 6888).

17 Double portrait miniature in original gold locket, £13,500. D. S. Lavender.



You need never miss your favourite television programme or sporting event if you take the Virtual Vision Sport—a neat, belt-mounted television recorder, right, and ultra-light sun visor—with you. The tiny machine projects a 1-inch image, far right, and superimposes it on your normal field of view. Used with a camcorder, it means you no longer have to squint through a viewfinder but are free to hold the camera at any height or angle while viewing the scene through the headset. Around £700 from major electrical retailers.



*New technology
makes ever
smaller treasures
to add to
old favourites.*

ALL ITEMS SHOWN
AT ACTUAL SIZE.

Clockwise from top right:

Adventures in scale: beautifully bound edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass* . . ., by Lewis Carroll, Everyman's Children's Classics, £7.99.

Chunky edition of Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*, Chatto Pocket Library, £9.99.

The Teeny Weeny Cat Book by Martin Leman, Pelham Books, £2.99.

Golden Maglite torch, £12.95. The Conran Shop, 81 Fulham Road, SW3 (071-589 7401).

Brass candleholder, £5.95 a pair plus p & p. The V & A Treasury Christmas catalogue, Freepost SU361, Department 5316, Hendon Road, Sunderland, SR9 9AD (091-514 2999).

Mini candles, £1.45 for eight. John Lewis, Oxford Street, W1 (071-629 7711), and branches.

Leather Tejus pocket organiser, £56.85. Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1 (071-730 1234).

Concertina display of six sterling silver miniature photograph-holders, £45, plus p & p. V & A Treasury Christmas catalogue.

Canon Sureshot Mini automatic camera, £139.99. From photographic shops.

Leather backgammon set with magnetic counters, £425. Harrods.

Gibson Les Paul guitar in silver and 18-carat gold, £5,200. Theo Fennell, 177 Fulham Road, SW3 (071-376 4855).

Sony CM-R111 portable phone, £499.99. From major electrical retailers.

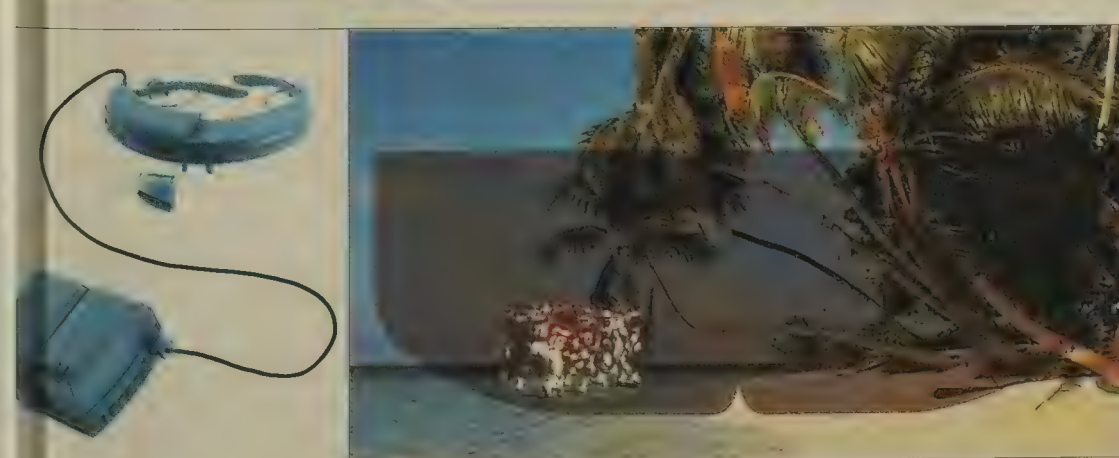
Mini crackers, £3.99 for six. Paperchase, 213 Tottenham Court Road, W1 (071-580 8496), and branches.

Gold glass baubles, £3.99 for 12. Paperchase.

Opera glasses, £75. Royal Opera House Shop, 7 James Street, WC2 (071-240 1200).

Sony Scoopman digital tape recorder, £649.99. From major electrical retailers.

STYLIST AMANDA GILES



BRONZE AGE WRECK'S REVELATIONS

Copper ingots, ostrich eggshells and a gold seal of Nefertiti are among the cargo salvaged from a Bronze Age ship off the Turkish coast. David Gibbins explains how the wreck is expanding our knowledge of ancient trade patterns.

Underwater archaeologists are excavating one of the oldest and richest shipwrecks yet discovered. Dating from the late-14th or early-13th century BC, when the Mycenaean Greek civilisation was flourishing, the wreck has yielded a wealth of finds, including metal ingots, jewellery, pottery, anchors, tools and weapons.

It lies below the rocky headland of Ulu Burun, near Kaş, in south-western Turkey, on the ancient sea route between the eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean. In 1983 local sponge divers reported the site to a team from the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, which is based at Texas A&M University and at Bodrum, Turkey. Excavations have been conducted since 1984 under Professor George Bass and Cemal Pulak, in collaboration with the Turkish authorities.

The mound of material—undisturbed by looters—lies spread down a slope at a depth of between 44 and 51 metres. Its size suggests a ship between 15 and 18 metres long. Excitingly, some timbers have survived, making this the earliest known seagoing hull. The keel and strakes of fir were joined by pegged mortise-and-tenon, in which small slats of oak (tenons) were fitted into holes (mortises) chiselled in the edge of each timber at regular intervals. Once the adjacent plank was slotted on, the tenons were secured by driving wooden pegs through the front and back of each joint. The mortise-and-tenon, "shell-first" technique, typical of later Greek and Roman ships, was thus well-established by the late second millennium BC.

Wrecks can help preserve raw materials, such as metal ingots, which would rapidly have been transformed into manufactured goods at their destination, and are rarely found at land sites.



The Ulu Burun ship carried at least 24 stone anchors, of three basic sizes—the first to be found in a Bronze Age wreck. Some were stacked in pairs athwartships between rows of copper ingots.

At least 12 tonnes of cargo and stone ballast included more than 250 metal ingots. Most are four-handled, oxhide-shaped copper ingots, each weighing between 20 and 30 kilogrammes, and are typical of this period; other copper ingots are of discoid and bun shape. The four-handled types were laid in overlapping rows like shingles, the lowest layer

An oxhide-shaped copper ingot, partly protected by plaster of Paris, is chiselled free from the Ulu Burun ship's large and varied cargo.

bedded in branches of thorny burnet. The second essential ingredient of bronze is represented by tin ingots, the earliest well-dated examples.

Alongside the ingots were at least 100 "Canaanite" (Syro-Palestinian) amphorae, early examples of the capacious, two-handled pottery vessels later used throughout the Mediterranean to transport liquid and perishable goods. Their main contents

were about 1 tonne of resin from the terebinth tree (turpentine), perhaps used as incense or as a cleaner; among the other amphorae was one filled with olive pits and one with orpiment, the yellow trisulphide of arsenic used as a pigment. Seven pithoi, huge pottery jars each of about 100 kilogrammes capacity, have also been found. One may have carried pomegranates, another contained an unknown liquid, preserved only as a dark stain on the seabed, while in several others were stacks of Cypriot table pottery, the main manufactured cargo on the ship. The smaller pottery forms included a crater, nested stacks of Cypriot bowls, five ram's-head drinking cups, several Cypriot juglets in "white-shaved" style and Cypriot lamps; there were also "pilgrim flasks", probably filled with liquids.

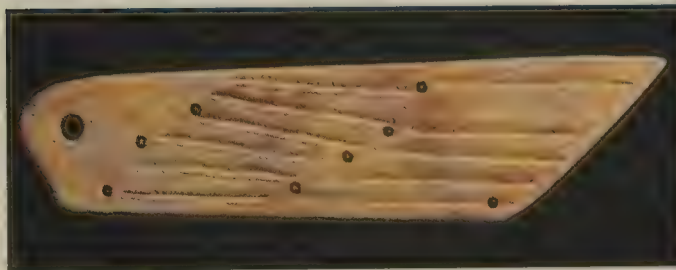
The extraordinary variety of raw materials at Ulu Burun includes 100 kilogrammes of cobalt-blue glass ingots, the earliest known. Other finds are murex shells, which were harvested for their famous purple dye—an industry associated especially with Tyre, in modern Lebanon. Astonishingly delicate finds were five ostrich eggshells, perhaps intended as the bowls of cups to be reinforced with silver or gold.

Three logs of African blackwood ebony were probably from upper Egypt. Another exotic raw material was ivory—whole sections of elephant and hippopotamus tusk as well as several hippo teeth, an important source of ivory in the ancient Near East and Egypt. Examples of ivory carving from the wreck are two exquisite ivory wings, the covers of duck-shaped cosmetics boxes similar to examples from Syro-Palestine.

The ship's galley has yet to be located with certainty. However, there is a range of bronze objects that could have formed an equipment store. These include a



Clockwise from above: Cemel Pulak excavates around a number of Canaanite "pilgrim flasks", probably used for oils. An ivory wing that served as a pivoting lid on a duck-shaped cosmetics box. Three Cypriot oil lamps. Underside of an Egyptian gold stamp seal with hieroglyphics of Nefertiti, which may have been part of a royal cargo.



cup (rhyton) in the form of a ram's head. There were also many beads of faience, rock crystal, green glass and Baltic amber, and rings made from seashells. But the gold items are the most opulent: a magnificent chalice, perhaps Mycenaean; a vulture-shaped pendant, and others of probable Canaanite origin; a small gold-alloy bar; scrap jewellery, silver as well as gold, probably intended for reworking; and four medallions, one decorated in repoussé with a four-pointed star.

That there was at least one merchant on board is indicated by small balance-pan weights, including one of haematite, one of bronze in the shape of a fly and one of lead-filled bronze in the shape of a recumbent bull. They appear to be based on weight standards common to the Near East, Crete and Cyprus. Further evidence lies in several small rock-crystal seals, intricately carved with merchants' marks. One is of Mycenaean type and may have belonged to a Greek; this and the Mycenaean pottery have persuaded some scholars that the ship is of Greek origin. But there were also Kassite, Assyrian and Cypriot cylinder seals and Egyptian scarabs. The Kassite seal had gold caps partly covering the scene, so may have been re-used as jewellery.

A unique gold scarab of Nefertiti—so far the best dating evidence for the wreck—points tantalisingly to an Egyptian, even a royal Egyptian, connection. Certainly the rich catalogue of luxury and prestige items in the wreck would seem compatible with a high-ranking passenger or a royal consignment. On the other hand, the scarab was found near a deposit of scrap gold, including an Egyptian ring deliberately cut in two, so it may have little bearing on the ship's origin. However, we can be reasonably certain that it was heading west, perhaps towards one of the great palaces of Mycenaean Greece.

The wreck is important, not only for the spotlight it throws on Bronze Age trade and for its artifacts, but also because it demonstrates the very early foundations of a Mediterranean maritime tradition. The techniques of ship construction, the hull size, the types of cargo goods and receptacles, and the merchant's weighing equipment would all have been familiar to Roman and Byzantine traders almost 2,000 years later. We can anticipate more insights as excavation and study progresses □

cache of weapons—arrowheads, a spearhead, swords and a dagger; tools—a double-bladed axe, adzes, a knife (its wooden handle intact), a chisel, drill bits, tongs, razors and a sickle; and the remains of several cauldrons, one harbouring a nest of three bronze bowls.

A remarkable find is a sharpening kit for bronze blades, comprising medium- and fine-grain abrasive stones and an antler tine for honing and polishing, which may have belonged to the ship's carpenter. A number of bronze hooks and several hundred lead weights are probably from a

casting net, while a stone mortar and grinding tray may have been galley stores. The personal effects of the crew are not easy to identify: a spindle whorl and an astragal (a knucklebone used for divination or for playing a game similar to dice) may fall into this category.

There was also an abundance of luxury items, some perhaps belonging to wealthy passengers. Several of these finds are unique and spectacular. Five tortoise shells may have been the sound-boxes for musical instruments, perhaps lyres or lutes; there were also bronze cymbals and a

whistle-like tin object. Of great interest is a diptych, a folding wooden writing tablet. A three-piece cylindrical hinge joined two boxwood leaves, each 6.2 centimetres by 9.5 centimetres across. Their inner faces were recessed and cross-hatched to retain a wax writing surface. Although no identifiable characters remained on the surviving wax, the Ulu Burun diptych, perhaps from coastal north Syria or Cyprus, may be regarded as the oldest known book.

Other exotica were objects of faience (a molten silicate similar to glass), including a drinking

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DONALD A. TRACY, INSTITUTE OF NAUTICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

ILN'S SELECTIVE GUIDE TO SOME OF LONDON'S
MOST INTERESTING AND ENTERTAINING EVENTS

FESTIVE SEASON

THEATRE

Alan Bennett's charming stage version of *The Wind in the Willows* is back at the National for the Christmas season, & Pete Townshend's new rock opera for children, *The Iron Man*, has its première at the Young Vic. Two actresses combine their acting & singing skills: Elaine Paige in *Piaf*, & Jane Horrocks as Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*.

Addresses & telephone numbers are given on the first occasion a theatre's entry appears.

The Absence of War. David Hare's behind-the-scenes look at a Labour Party's general election campaign has more to do with personalities than political ideology. John Thaw is excellent as the Labour leader frustrated by the PR constraints of his campaign team. A strongly acted & fluently directed production. *Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252).*

All's Well That Ends Well. Peter Hall's Stratford production has Sophie Thompson as the doctor's daughter who cures the king but has to win the affections of the nobleman she claims as her reward. *The Pit, Barbican, EC2 (071-638 8891).*

Angels in America I & II. Last year's production of *Millennium Approaches*, the first part of Tony Kushner's epic of interweaving relationships exploring AIDS in the age of Reaganism, will be in repertory with its sequel, *Perestroika*. Both open Nov 20. *Cottesloe, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252).*

Arcadia. Vintage Tom Stoppard—a champagne cocktail of literary mystery, higher mathematics & the chaos theory which is extended to landscape gardening & the conflicts of country life. Set in both early 19th & late 20th centuries, the play fizzles with verbal facility & dramatic invention. Until Nov 24. *Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252).*

Cabaret. Sam Mendes directs Kander & Ebb's musical set in a sleazy night-club in the jazz-age Berlin of 1929. Opens Dec 9. *Donmar Warehouse, Earham St, WC2 (071-867 1150).*

Carousel. A West End transfer for the National's exhilarating production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's musical about the unhappy marriage of a carnival barker & a mill worker. *Shaftesbury Theatre, Shaftesbury Ave, WC2 (071-379 5399).*

City of Angels. A witty musical comedy about a thriller writer in Hollywood whose fiction reflects his own life. It has a fine cast, an evocative jazz score & a sharp, wisecracking script. Until Nov 13. *Prince of Wales, Coventry St, W1 (071-839 5972).*

Crazy for You. A lavish, hugely entertaining reworking of the Gershwin brothers' 1930 musical *Girl Crazy*, in which a star-struck banker puts on a show to save the theatre he is meant to be closing. *Prince Edward, Old Compton St, W1 (071-734 8951).*

Forever Plaid. Jolly but insubstantial American show celebrating the close-harmony quartets of the 1950s & early 60s. *Apollo, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (071-494 5070).*

An Inspector Calls. A recast version of the National's startling production of J.B. Priestley's 1945 moral thriller. *Aldwych Theatre, Aldwych, WC2 (071-836 6404).*

Machinal. Impressively designed but ultimately unmoving rendering of Sophie Treadwell's 1928 avant-garde feminist tragedy. Fiona Shaw gives a riveting performance as a woman unfulfilled by marriage & motherhood who murders her husband. *Lyttelton, National Theatre.*

The Madness of George III. Alan Bennett's moving play about the personal & political consequences of the king's illness. Nigel Hawthorne is tremendous in the title role. Returns Nov 29. *Lyttelton, National Theatre.*

Medea. Jonathan Kent's 90-minute production places Euripides's tragedy in a claustrophobic rusting metal set, in which Medea (Diana Rigg) plots



*Fighting talk: John Thaw is on the campaign trail in *The Absence of War*.*

murderous revenge for her husband's infidelity. Rigg conveys superbly the cunning behind the rage in an intense & intelligent staging. *Wyndham's, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (071-867 1116).*

Misha's Party. A new drama by American Richard Nelson & Russian Alexander Gelman, set in a Moscow hotel during the 1991 attempted coup to topple Gorbachev. Until Nov 25. *The Pit, Barbican.*

Moonlight. Harold Pinter's new play is a puzzling drama about mortality & the generation gap. A dying, bedridden civil servant (Ian Holm) rages against death while his wife (Anna Massey) listens patiently & his estranged sons spar with each other in another room. Holm & Massey impress in a strong cast. Opens Nov 4. *Comedy, Panton St, SW1 (071-867 1045).*

Mother Courage & Her Children. Hanif Kureishi's version of Brecht's drama has Ellie Haddington as the peasant matriarch trading to survive among the embattled factions of the Thirty Years' War. Opens Dec 6. *Cottesloe, National Theatre.*

Murmuring Judges. David Hare's drama about the judiciary, police & prison service is dynamically staged but too didactic to be dramatically satisfying. Until Nov 20. *Olivier, National Theatre.*

Oleanna. Harold Pinter's direction subtly handles the mounting tension in a grippingly acted drama by David Mamet in which a student (Lia Williams) accuses her professor (David Suchet) of sexual harassment &, later, rape. *Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-836 5122).*

Piaf. Elaine Paige plays Edith Piaf in Pam Gems's warts-&-all account of the singer's battles to overcome the pressures of fame, alcohol & drugs. Opens Dec 14. *Piccadilly Theatre, Denman St, W1 (071-867 1118).*

Pickwick. Harry Secombe takes the title role in a musical version of Dickens's episodic novel. With Roy Castle. Until Nov 20. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (071-278 8916).*

Present Laughter. Noël Coward's comedy becomes a sluggish farce under the direction of Tom Conti, who also stars as an actor whose private life is complicated by his close circle of friends. Conti's laid-back charm is at odds with the sprightly dialogue, but there is good support from Jenny Seagrove, Gabrielle Drake & Judy Loe as the women in his life. *Globe, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (071-494 5067).*

Racing Demon. Moving & stimulating drama by David Hare about four priests in an inner-city parish. Oliver Ford Davies is superb as a clergyman who questions his faith & the hierarchy of the Church of England. Until Nov 20. *Olivier, National Theatre.*

Relative Values. Enjoyable but occasionally lumbering revival of Noël Coward's 1951 class-conscious comedy about the efforts of a countess (Susan Hampshire) to prevent her son from marrying a Hollywood starlet (Sara Crowe). Opens Nov 8. *Savoy, Strand, WC2 (071-836 8888).*

She Stoops to Conquer. Peter Hall's production of Goldsmith's Restoration farce in which a squire's country house is mistaken for an inn. With David Essex, Donald Sinden & Miriam Margolyes. *Queens, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (071-494 5041).*

Sunset Boulevard. Andrew Lloyd Webber's stylishly staged musical adaptation of Billy Wilder's 1950 film sentimentalises the sardonic original. Patti LuPone sings superbly but is too young to convince as the forgotten silent-movie star attempting a comeback. Trevor Nunn directs. *Adelphi, Strand, WC2 (071-344 0055).*

Tamburlaine the Great. Marlowe's two-part Elizabethan epic is made into one three-hour drama in Adrian Noble's production. Antony Sher plays the 14th-century mighty conqueror. *Barbican Theatre, Barbican, EC2 (071-638 8891).*

The Taming of the Shrew. Shakespeare's battle of the sexes has Anton Lesser & Amanda Harris as the lovers. Bill Alexander directs. Until Nov 25. *Barbican Theatre, Barbican.*



Diana Rigg, a cunning *Medea*. Eileen Atkins & Penelope Wilton, friends in *Vita & Virginia*. Rat & Mole, riverbank chums in *The Wind in the Willows*.

Travels with My Aunt. Giles Havergal's eccentric adaptation of Graham Greene's novel about a retired bank manager's adventures with his globe-trotting aunt. Four actors play 20 or so characters in what is less a play & more a *tour de force* of comic acting. *Whitehall Theatre, Whitehall, SW1* (071-867 1119).

Travesties. Tom Stoppard's 1974 philosophical comedy is a dazzling mixture of parody, slapstick, & debate about art & revolution. Antony Sher plays a British consular official in 1917 Zurich who becomes involved with Lenin, James Joyce & Tristan Tzara. *Barbican Theatre, Barbican*.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona. David Thacker's entertaining production, complete with on-stage palm court orchestra, sets Shakespeare's early romantic comedy in 1930s high society. Dec 13-Jan 15. *Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1* (071-930 8800).

Vita & Virginia. The passionate & difficult relationship between Virginia Woolf (Eileen Atkins) & Vita Sackville West (Penelope Wilton) is explored through their correspondence. *Ambassadors, West St, WC2* (071-836 6111).

Wildest Dreams. Alan Ayckbourn directs his own dark comedy about a group of sad, insecure individuals who retreat into the world of a role-playing fantasy board-game. With Brenda Blethyn & Sophie Thompson. Opens Dec 14. *The Pit, Barbican*.

The Winter's Tale. John Nettles effectively portrays the jealousy & remorse of Leontes in Shakespeare's most elegiac play, with Samantha Bond both touching & dignified as his wronged wife. Until Dec 4. *Barbican Theatre, Barbican*.

RECOMMENDED LONG RUNNERS

Blood Brothers. *Phoenix* (071-867 1044); **Buddy.** *Victoria Palace* (071-834 1317); **Cats.** *New London* (071-405 0072); **Five Guys Named Moe.** *Lyric* (071-494 5045); **Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.** *Palladium* (071-494 5020); **Les Misérables.** *Palace* (071-434 0909);

Miss Saigon. *Theatre Royal, Drury Lane* (071-494 5001); **The Mousetrap.** *St Martin's* (071-836 1443); **The Phantom of the Opera.** *Her Majesty's* (071-494 5400); **Starlight Express.** *Apollo Victoria* (071-630 6262); **The Woman in Black.** *Fortune* (071-836 2238).

OUT OF TOWN

RSC season at Stratford: At the Royal Shakespeare Theatre: *King Lear*, with Robert Stephens. *The Merchant of Venice*, with David Calder as Shylock. *The Tempest*, with Alec McCowen as Prospero. *Love's Labour's Lost*, with Daniel Massey. At the Swan Theatre: *Murder in the Cathedral* by T.S. Eliot. *The Venetian Twins* by Goldoni in a new version by Ranjit Bolt. *The Country Wife* by Wycherley. *Elgar's Rondo* by David Pownall, with Alec McCowen as Edward Elgar. At The Other Place: *Ghosts* by Ibsen, with Jane Lapotaire & Simon Russell Beale. *Moby Dick*, with David Calder as Captain Ahab. *Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwicks CV37 6BB* (0789 295623).

CHRISTMAS & CHILDREN'S SHOWS

Aladdin. A traditional Victorian panto performed in one of London's last remaining music-halls. Dec 8-mid-Feb. *Players' Theatre, Villiers St, WC2* (071-839 1134).

Beauty & the Beast. The well-known fairy-tale adapted for the stage. Nov 13-Jan 23. *Unicorn, Great Newport St, WC2* (071-836 3334).

The BFG. David Wood's adaptation of Roald Dahl's book about a big, friendly giant. Nov 23-Jan 15. *Albany, St Martin's Lane, WC2* (071-867 1115).

Cinderella. Dorothy Atkins in the title role. Dec 21-Jan 15. *Shaw Theatre, 100 Euston Rd, NW1* (071-388 1394).

Cinderella. With Ronnie Corbett as Buttons & Janet Brown as the Fairy Godmother. Dec 10-Jan 15. *Churchill, Bromley, Kent* (081-460 6677).

Dick Whittington. Cheryl Baker in the title role, with Lorraine Chase & John Altman. Dec 10-Jan 16. *Ashcroft, Croydon, Surrey* (081-688 9291).

Dick Whittington & His Cat. With Jonathan Morris, Kate O'Mara & Bernard Cribbins. *Richmond Theatre, Richmond, Surrey* (081-940 0088).

Grease. Exuberant rock 'n' roll musical that pastiches the morals, manners & music of teenagers in the 1950s. *Dominion, Tottenham Court Rd, W1* (071-580 8845).

The Iron Man. Pete Townshend's rock-opera adaptation of the Ted Hughes novel in which the metal hero saves the world from a "space-bat-angel-dragon". David Thacker directs. Nov 25-Feb 12. *Young Vic, The Cut, SE1* (071-928 6363).

Jack & the Beanstalk. With Stefan Dennis, Little & Large, & Vicki Michelle. Dec 16-Jan 30. *Wimbledon Theatre, 93 The Broadway, SW19* (081-540 0362).

Noddy. Adventures with Enid Blyton's little hero. Dec 13-Jan 16. *Lyric Hammersmith, King St, W6* (081-741 2311).

Peter Pan. The Black Light Theatre of Prague presents J.M. Barrie's tale. Dec 21-Jan 8. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1* (071-278 8916).

Peter Pan. Toyah Willcox is Peter with Brian Blessed as Captain Hook. Dec 17-Jan 8. *Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, Surrey* (0483 60191).

Red Riding Hood: The Panto. A new show by Patrick Prior, including a witch called Hazel & three pigs. Dec 1-Jan 22. *Theatre Royal Stratford East, Gerry Raffles Sq, E15* (081-534 0310).

Sleeping Beauty. A staging of the popular story. Nov 18-Feb 5. *Polka, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19* (081-543 4888).

Sooty's World Cruise. Glove puppets for the very young. Dec 20-Jan 8. *Bloomsbury Theatre, Gordon St, WC1* (071-387 9629).

The Wind in the Willows. Alan Bennett's adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's book. Michael Bryant is Badger, with Desmond Barrit as Toad, David Ross as Rat & Adrian Scarborough as Mole. Opens Dec 1. *Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1* (071-928 2252).

CINEMA

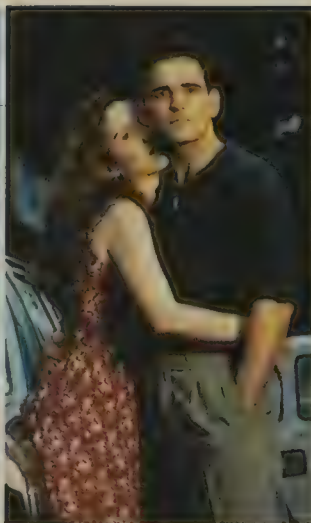
The 37th London Film Festival opens on Nov 4 with James Ivory's *The Remains of the Day*, & closes 17 days later with Chen Kaige's *Farewell to My Concubine*, which will not be generally seen until early in the New Year. A Christmas treat for the family is Disney's *Aladdin*, accompanied for its Odeon Leicester Square performances, between Nov 19 & Dec 3, by a live 10-minute show with Disney characters.

Aladdin (U). A Disney classic, the best animated feature in 55 years of output. There are nods to the Korda version of *The Thief of Bagdad* in this Arabian Nights delight, which excels in the choice of voices, most notably Robin Williams as the uncorked genie. The pleasing songs by Alan Menken, with lyrics by Howard Ashman & Tim Rice, have a lilt more reminiscent of Kern & Porter than contemporary pop, & are sung by Brad Kane & Lea Salonga as the street urchin Aladdin & the feisty Princess Jasmine. Opens Nov 19.

Benefit of the Doubt (18). Donald Sutherland plays a wife murderer, discharged from prison after 22 years, who tracks down his daughter (Amy Irving). As a child, she was the key witness in his trial. Now a single mother, she allows him to become friendly with her son & begins to doubt her own testimony. The director is Jonathan Heap. Opens Nov 26.

The Cement Garden (18). Andrew Birkin's film is adapted from Ian McEwan's novel in which four children inter their bedridden mother in the cellar when she dies & then try to carry on as normal. Instead, they establish a private, incestuous world from which they attempt to exclude outsiders.

Dave (12). In Ivan Reitman's new comedy the US president (Kevin



Aladdin, a Christmas treat from Disney. Mary-Louise Parker & Matt Dillon, lovers in *Mr Wonderful*. Helen Mirren, a nervous housewife in *The Hawk*.

Kline) has a habit of not being available to wave to the public (he is usually engaged in bedroom matters) & uses a stand-in, Dave (Kevin Kline again). Then the president has a stroke and his crooked chief of staff Frank Langella) installs the substitute in the Oval office to thwart the vice-president (Ben Kingsley). Even the First Lady (Sigourney Weaver) is not told. The build-up is fun, but the film runs out of steam. Opens Nov 5.

Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story (15). Jason Scott Lee (no relation) plays the martial-arts superstar whose astonishing career in Hong Kong kung-fu movies ended with his death at the age of 32. Rob Cohen's technically accomplished film seems at times to be a pastiche of routine film biographies, as well as a gentle send-up of martial-arts fever.

La Fille de l'Air (18). Béatrice Dalle plays a young woman who organises the escape from prison of her husband (Thierry Fortineau). The story is true—a notable *cause célèbre* in France—but British audiences will benefit by not knowing the outcome. Opens Nov 12.

The Hawk (15). Helen Mirren plays a nervous northern housewife who begins to suspect that her husband, who is frequently away, is a motorway serial murderer. When she kills him it looks as though a terrible mistake has been made. Over-fussy camerawork mars David Hayman's engrossing British film. Opens Nov 26.

Homeward Bound: The Incredible Journey (U). The Disney live-action adventure of 1963, in which three household pets trek across an inhospitable wilderness, remade with embellishments. The most notable is that the animals are now voiced: the golden retriever by Don Ameche, the mongrel by Michael J. Fox & the cat by Sally Field. It works rather well on an anthropomorphic level, & the excitement is crisply maintained by Duwayne Dunham's direction.

In the Line of Fire (15). Clint

Eastwood is excellent in this absorbing political thriller as an unorthodox secret service agent whose job it is to protect the US president, but who is haunted by his failure to shield John F. Kennedy in 1963.

The Man Without a Face (12). This year's choice for the Royal Film Performance is the first film directed by Mel Gibson, who also stars as a hideously scarred, reclusive man brought out of his shell by a 12-year-old, fatherless boy. Opens Nov 19.

Mr Wonderful (12). British writer-director Anthony Minghella makes his American debut with a good-humoured New York comedy. A divorced blue-collar worker (Matt Dillon) attempts to escape alimony by getting his ex-wife (Annabella Sciorra) married off.

Naked (18). Mike Leigh's new film returns to the pessimism of his 1971 movie *Bleak Moments* & is a comment on the failure of modern Britain to offer fulfilment to the less privileged. The central character is a homeless cynic (David Thewlis) living on his wits by begging, while despising the rest of society. Opens Nov 5.

The Piano (15). Jane Campion's film is set in a remote corner of mid-19th-century New Zealand. Holly Hunter plays a mute Scotswoman who arrives with her nine-year-old daughter to make an arranged marriage with a landowner, Sam Neill. His estate manager, Harvey Keitel, offers to retrieve her piano in exchange for music lessons, which leads to a full-blooded affair. Acting & direction brilliantly heighten the dramatic sense.

Posse (15). The setting is Cuba in 1898 during the Spanish-American war. A group of marauding soldiers—including Mario Van Peebles, who also directs—flee their regiment & its crazed commander (Billy Zane) with a gold shipment & make for a utopian black township. The excitements are considerable in what can be regarded as the first mainstream African-American western. Opens Nov 19.

Raining Stones (15). A chronically unemployed man in a grey town in the Mancunian hinterland is determined to buy a communion dress for his daughter & falls foul of the local loan shark. Ken Loach's film paints a bleak view of the post-Thatcher years & the desperate condition of its victims, but there is much humour to relieve an otherwise depressing story.

The Remains of the Day (U). Forster's *oeuvre* now exhausted, James Ivory has turned to the Booker prizewinner Kazuo Ishiguro, whose novel has been adapted by Ruth Praver Jhabvala. The time is the 1930s. Anthony Hopkins is brilliant as butler to a peer (James Fox) who is engaged in attempts to stave off the imminent war with Germany through diplomatic pressure. Emma Thompson delivers another extraordinary performance as the housekeeper. Opens Nov 12.

Rising Sun (18). Michael Crichton's novel on ruthless Japanese corporate methods infiltrating the American business world has been modified for the screen to avoid offending diplomatic sensibilities. Sean Connery is on top form as a maverick Los Angeles police captain & scholar of Japanese traditions. He takes on the qualities of a *samurai* to solve the bizarre killing of a call-girl on the opening night of a Japanese corporation's Los Angeles skyscraper.

Ruby in Paradise (15). Ashley Judd plays a young woman from Tennessee who tries to establish an independent life for herself in a Florida resort area where she spent a childhood holiday. Directed by Victor Nunez, the film is a sensitive account of the experience of self-discovery. Opens Nov 26.

The Secret Garden (U). A fine new version of the Frances Hodgson Burnett novel, previously filmed in 1949 & 1987. Kate Maberly gives a remarkably self-assured performance as the orphaned girl who discovers a neglected, walled garden on her reclusive uncle's Yorkshire estate &, with the help of her invalid cousin & a local

boy, transforms it into a place of enchantment. Maggie Smith plays the fierce housekeeper.

Sleepless in Seattle (PG). A gentle, romantic comedy written & directed by Nora Ephron. A Baltimore reporter (Meg Ryan) hears a young widower (Tom Hanks) in Seattle talking on an evening radio phone-in show about his failure to adjust to the loss of his wife. On the verge of marriage to a safe, dull man, Ryan falls in love with the voice & resolves to meet its owner.

This Boy's Life (15). An autobiographical novel by Tobias Wolff is the source of Michael Caton Jones's sensitively directed film set in the 1950s. Leonardo DiCaprio plays an American youth with a divorced mother (Ellen Barkin) who decides to marry a persistent suitor (Robert De Niro) to give her son the benefit of a fatherly presence. De Niro's portrayal of an overbearing, ignorant bully, desperately jealous of the boy's intelligence, is one of the best of his recent performances.

True Romance (18). Quentin Tarantino wrote the witty screenplay in which a comics shop employee (Christian Slater) & a neophyte call-girl (Patricia Arquette) find they are soul mates. They flee from Detroit to Los Angeles with a suitcase full of cocaine that the owner is anxious to retrieve. A send-up of its violent genre, Tony Scott's film is not to be taken too seriously. With Christopher Walken & Dennis Hopper.

The Young Americans (18). A vigorous thriller with Harvey Keitel as a New York policeman on attachment in London to combat drugs. The style of the film, directed by Danny Cannon, leans heavily on its Hollywood counterparts, but the effect of transplanting an American thriller ambience to Soho and Wapping is unsatisfactory.

37th London Film Festival. One of the key events in the film year. Nov 4-21. Information: 071-928 2695. Box office: 071-928 3232.



John Tomlinson is the Royal Opera's Hans Sachs. Janice Watson sings Lucia for Welsh National Opera. LGDT presents Aletta Collins's Shoes at Sadler's Wells.

OPERA

Wagner rules in London with a vital production of *Die Meistersinger* at the Royal Opera & an eagerly awaited staging of *Lohengrin* at English National Opera. Michael Berkeley's new work based on Kipling can be seen at Opera North & a Verdi rarity based on Byron at Scottish Opera, while Welsh National presents an untraditional *Cinderella*.

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-836 3161).

The Barber of Seville. Alan Opie sings the title role, with Louise Winter as Rosina & Paul Nilon as Almaviva, in Jonathan Miller's *commedia dell'arte* influenced staging. Nov 2,4,6,11,13, 18,26,Dec 1.

Figaro's Wedding. Arwel Huw Morgan sings Figaro, with Cathryn Pope as Susanna, Peter Sidhom as Count Almaviva, Margaret Marshall as Countess Almaviva, in Graham Vick's colourful & fast-moving production; Sian Edwards/Nicholas Kok conducts. Nov 3,5,10,12,17,19,25,30, Dec 4,9,16.

Lohengrin. Mark Elder conducts Tim Albery's new staging; John Keyes sings Lohengrin, Linda McLeod is Elsa, Linda Finnie is Ortrud, Malcolm Donnelly is Telramund. Nov 20,24,27, Dec 2,8, 11,18,22,29.

Die Fledermaus. With Vivian Tierney as Rosalinda, Geoffrey Dolton/Donald Maxwell as Eisenstein. Dec 3,7,10,15,17,21(m&e) 31.

ROYAL OPERA

Covent Garden, WC2 (071-240 1066).

Mitridate, rè di Ponto. Last performances of Graham Vick's brilliantly conceived production, with Ann Murray, Bruce Ford, Jochen Kowalski, Luba Orgonasova. Nov 1,3.

Eugene Onegin. Dmitri Hvorostovsky & Catherine Malfitano are the new Onegin & Tatyana in the first

revival of John Cox's staging, in Timothy O'Brien's unequivocal sets; Mark Ermler conducts. Nov 2,6,9,11. **Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg.** Graham Vick's unaffectedly high-spirited production, in Richard Hudson's Brueghelesque settings, is crowned by John Tomlinson's touchingly humane Hans Sachs: more extrovert than poetically introspective, but vividly responsive to the other characters. Nancy Gustafson is a ravishing Eva & Gösta Winbergh her winning lover (though embarrassingly overdressed, literally, in shining armour for his trial). Bernard Haitink's conducting supplies the firm foundation for a performance that is not to be missed. Nov 4,8,13.

Die Zauberflöte. Martin Duncan's production arrives via Scottish Opera. Alternating casts include Amanda Roocroft/Rosa Mannion as Pamina, Kurt Streit/Herbert Lippert/Gösta Winbergh as Tamino, Peter Coleman-Wright/Wolfgang Holzmair as Papageno, Sumi Jo/Eva Mei as Queen of the Night; Andrew Parrott/David Syrus conducts. Nov 15,17,19,23,25,27(m&e),30,Dec 3(m&e),6,9,11(m&e, available only to those on low incomes).

Tosca. Edward Downes conducts one of the company's favourite productions, with Anna Tomowa-Sintow as Floria Tosca, Alberto Cupido as Cavaradossi, Sergei Leiferkus as Baron Scarpia. Dec 4,7,10,13,16,18.

OUT OF TOWN

ENGLISH TOURING OPERA

Così fan tutte, L'elisir d'amore. *Marlowe, Canterbury (0227 767246);* Nov 9-13. *Orchard, Dartford (0322 220000);* Nov 25-27.

GLYNDEBOURNE TOURING OPERA

La clemenza di Tito. Finely sung revival of Nicholas Hytner's gripping neo-classical production, with Nigel Robson as Tito, Fiona Janes as Sesto.

Don Giovanni. Simon Keenlyside & Steven Page strike sparks as the dissolute master & his unruly servant.

Cornet Christoph Rilke's Song of Love & Death. A rewarding &

moving opera by Siegfried Matthus, not helped by its over-busy staging. *Apollo, Oxford (0865 244544);* Nov 2-6. *Mayflower, Southampton (0703 229771);* Nov 9-13.

OPERA NORTH

Grand Theatre, Leeds (0532 459351).

Baa-Baa Black Sheep. Michael Berkeley's first opera, based on a semi-autobiographical story by Kipling, conducted by Paul Daniel. Nov 13,16,17,19.

Il re pastore. Mozart's early & little-known opera, directed by David McVicar, with Joan Rodgers as the shepherd Amyntas. Nov 15,18,20.

SCOTTISH OPERA

Theatre Royal, Glasgow (041-332 9000).

Salome. Beverly Morgan sings the title role, with Neil Jenkins as Herod, in André Engel's claustrophobically atmospheric production, conducted by Richard Armstrong. Nov 2,4.

Tosca. Eva Zsella sings Tosca, with Jonathan Welch as Cavaradossi & Henk Smit as Scarpia, in a production set in the Fascist era. Nov 3.

I due Foscari. Verdi's opera based on a play by Byron. Nov 6(m).

Also **Katya Kabanova.** Helen Field sings the title role.

King's, Edinburgh (031-220 4349); Nov 9-13. *Theatre Royal, Newcastle (091-232 2061);* Nov 16-27. *His Majesty's, Aberdeen (0224 641122);* Nov 30-Dec 4.

TRAVELLING OPERA

Festival Theatre, Chichester (0243 781312).

La Bohème, Carmen, The Magic Flute. Nov 23-27.

WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

New Theatre, Cardiff (0222 394844).

Falstaff. Donald Maxwell repeats his fine portrayal of the fat knight. Nov 13.

Lucia di Lammermoor. Janice Watson surmounts the vocal hurdles & gives a moving portrayal of Lucia in Rennie Wright's bare & unpoetic production. Nov 19.

Cinderella. Rebecca Evans sings the title role in Massenet's opera. Nov 20. *Hippodrome, Birmingham (021-622 7486);* Nov 23-27. *Apollo, Oxford (0865 244544);* Nov 30-Dec 4. *Hippodrome, Bristol (0272 299444);* Dec 7-11.

DANCE

Tchaikovsky's fairy-tale ballet *The Nutcracker* can be seen in traditional productions in London & in many other cities. At Sadler's Wells there is a chance to experience a fresh look at this favourite work, as well as a season of modern dance. *Tales of Beatrix Potter* returns to the Royal Ballet, with special matinees to enable tiny tots to see their favourite characters on stage.

Adventures in Motion Pictures, in their new treatment of *The Nutcracker*, with choreography by Matthew Bourne & designs by Anthony Ward, accompanied by the New London Orchestra. Dec 8-18. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (071 278 8916).*

English National Ballet performs Ben Stevenson's version of *The Nutcracker*, with designs by Desmond Heeley, Dec 22-Jan 22. *Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-928 8800).*

London Contemporary Dance Theatre presents three different programmes, which include premières of ballets by Richard Alston, Christopher Bruce, Aletta Collins, Darshan Singh Buller, French choreographer Angelin Preljocaj & German-based Amanda Miller, some featuring commissioned scores by British composers working for the first time with dance. Nov 23-Dec 4. *Sadler's Wells.*

Royal Ballet. MacMillan's *Romeo & Juliet*, with Leslie Collier, Darcy Bussell & Viviana Durante alternating as Juliet, Bruce Sansom, Zoltan Solymosi & Irek Mukhamedov as Romeo; Nov 5,12,18,22. Quadruple bill: Matthew Hart's *Fanfare*, to music by Brian Elias, William Tuckett's *If this is still a problem*, to Ravel's piano trio, William Forsythe's *Herman Schmerman* & Kenneth MacMillan's *Different Drummer*; Nov 10,16,24, Dec 2. Double bill: Balanchine's *Ballet*



Ballet Imperial at Covent Garden. Igor Oistrakh celebrates at the Barbican. Leeds prizewinner Riccardo Castro gives a recital at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Imperial, with various débuts scheduled, & Ashton's *Tales of Beatrix Potter*, staged by Anthony Dowell; Nov 20 m&e; 26, 29, Dec 8, 14, 15, 21, 29, 30; *Beatrix Potter* only, matinées Dec 21, 22, 29. *The Nutcracker*, Dec 17, 18(m), 20, 22, 23 m&e; 28, 31. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-240 1066).

Winter Gala at the Royal Opera House, featuring Tchaikovsky's ballets & operas, with Darcey Bussell, Sylvie Guillem, Irek Mukhamedov, Zoltan Solymosi, Kiri Te Kanawa, Plácido Domingo, Paata Burchuladze. Dec 1. Information 071-351 7835.

OUT OF TOWN

Birmingham Royal Ballet. Triple bill: *Street*, new ballet by Matthew Hart, to music by William Russo, Ashton's *The Dream*, MacMillan's *Elite Syncopations*; Nov 3, 4(m&e). *Sylvia*, David Bintley's new production of Delibes's ballet based on a Greek myth; Nov 5, 6(m&e). *The Nutcracker*, Peter Wright's production, combining his own choreography with that of Ivanov & Redmon; Dec 3-18. Hippodrome, Birmingham (021-622 7486).

On tour

Sylvia, Nov 16, 17(m&e), 18. Triple bill: Nov 19, 20(m&e). *Theatre Royal, Plymouth* (0752 267222). *The Sleeping Beauty*, Nov 23, 24, 25(m&e). *Theatre Royal, Norwich* (0603 630000).

English National Ballet. *The Sleeping Beauty*. Nov 1-6; *Palace, Manchester* (061-236 9922). Nov 16-20; *Hippodrome, Bristol* (0272 299444). Nov 22-27; *Grand, Leeds* (0532 459351). *The Nutcracker*. Nov 8-13; *Empire, Liverpool* (051-709 1555). Nov 29-Dec 4; *Palace, Manchester*. Dec 7-11; *Concert Hall, Nottingham* (0602 482626).

Rambert Dance Company. Triple bill: *Land* by Christopher Bruce, *Embarque* by Siobhan Davies, *Spirit*, new work by Mark Baldwin to music by Poulenc, costumes by Natasha Kornilof. Nov 9-13; *Haymarket, Leicester* (0533 539797); Nov 24-27. *Apollo, Oxford* (0865 244544). *Embarque, Spirit, Strong Language*. Nov 16-20; *Festival Theatre, Chichester* (0243 781312).

MUSIC

Berlioz enthusiasts will not wish to miss the chance to hear *The Trojans*, conducted at the Barbican by Colin Davis, the composer's great champion in this country. Purcell is to be honoured at the South Bank where, in anticipation of his tercentenary, a weekend will be devoted to *The Fairy Queen*. The Leeds piano competition winner, Riccardo Castro, makes his London début, in the same month that keyboard giants Pollini, Richter & Brendel all give South Bank recitals.

ALBERT HALL.

Kensington Gore, SW7 (071-589 8212).

London Festival Orchestra, Malcolm Sargent Festival Choir. Ross Pople conducts Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*, *Exsultate Jubilate* & *Requiem*. Nov 14, 7.30pm.

The Royal Concert. Charles Mackerras conducts the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Goldsmiths Choral Union, London Choral Society in Elgar's *Enigma Variations* & Beethoven's *Symphony No 9* (Choral). Nov 24, 8pm.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, St Bartholomew's Hospital Choral Society. Thomas Dausgaard conducts Brahms's *German Requiem*. Nov 25, 7.30pm.

Messiah From Scratch. David Willcocks conducts the English Festival Orchestra & a chorus of 4,000, open to anyone who buys a ticket, in an unrehearsed performance. Nov 26, 30, 7.30pm.

Tchaikovsky's Iolanta. Concert performance conducted by Valery Gergiev, with Galina Gorchakova, Gegam Grigorian, Sergei Leiferkus & Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Dec 6, 7.30pm.

BARBICAN HALL.

Silk St, EC2 (071-638 8891).

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. Armin Jordan conducts

Schumann's *Piano Concerto*, with Martha Argerich, Shostakovich's *Symphony No 10*. Nov 6, 7.30pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. André Previn conducts two performances of Elgar's *Symphony No 2*, preceded by Barber's *Violin Concerto*, with Itzhak Perlman, Nov 10; preceded by Bartók's *Piano Concerto No 3*, with Krystian Zimerman, Nov 11; 7.30pm.

Orchestre National de Lille. Jean-Claude Casadesu conducts Haydn's oratorio *The Creation*, with Pro Musica Chorus of London. Nov 12, 7.30pm.

Igor Oistrakh celebrates the 40th anniversary of his London début by playing solo violin in works by Bach, Mozart & Vivaldi, with the English Chamber Orchestra, directed by Ian Watson. Nov 13, 8pm.

St Petersburg Symphony Orchestra. Yuri Temirkanov conducts a Rachmaninov programme, to mark the 50th anniversary of the composer's death, with Dmitri Alexeev, piano. Nov 15, 7.30pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. Kent Nagano conducts Boulez's *Messagesquisse*, Mozart's *Piano Concerto No 13*, with Barry Douglas, & Mahler's *Symphony No 5*, Nov 18; the UK première of Messiaen's *Eclairs sur l'au-delà*, Nov 21; Boulez's *Messagesquisse*, Paganini's *Violin Concerto No 1*, with Sarah Chang, Mahler's *Symphony No 5*, Nov 25; 7.30pm.

English Chamber Orchestra, Thomas Tallis Choir. Andrew Constantine conducts Bach's *Magnificat* & Fauré's *Requiem*. Nov 20, 8pm.

Opera Gala. Tito Beltran, tenor winner of the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, & Rosalind Sutherland, soprano, with London Concert Orchestra, sing arias from operas by Puccini, Donizetti, Gounod, Verdi. Nov 27, 8pm.

The Trojans. Colin Davis conducts the London Symphony Orchestra in concert performances, with Jane Henschel as Cassandra, Vladimir

Bogachov as Aeneas, Luciana D'Intino as Dido. Part I Dec 4, 8, 7.30pm & Dec 12, 3pm; Part II Dec 5, 9, 7.30pm & Dec 12, 7.30pm.

FESTIVAL HALL.

South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-928 8800).

Maurizio Pollini, piano. Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin. Nov 3, 7.30pm.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Vladimir Ashkenazy conducts Tchaikovsky's *Romeo & Juliet* duet, with Roberta Alexander & Alexander Fedin, & *Symphony No 5*. Nov 6, 7.30pm.

London Philharmonic & Choir. Jukka-Pekka Saraste conducts Mahler's *Symphony No 5*, Jeremy Jackman conducts Brahms's *Song of Destiny*. Nov 7, 8, 7.30pm.

BBC Symphony Orchestra. Stephen Jackson conducts Brahms's *Four Songs for women's voices*, two horns & harp; Heinz Wallberg conducts Brahms's *Requiem*. Nov 10, 7.30pm.

Gounod Centenary Concert. Laszlo Heltay conducts the Royal Choral Society & Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Gounod's *St Cecilia Mass* & Fauré's *Requiem*. Nov 11, 7.30pm.

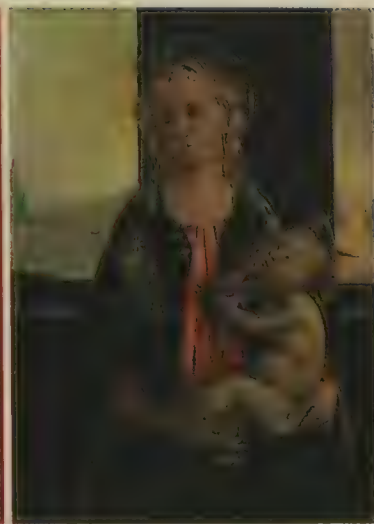
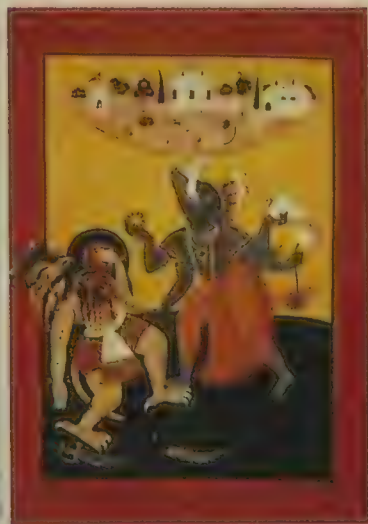
Jessye Norman, soprano, Geoffrey Parsons, piano. Schumann, Strauss, Messiaen, Schoenberg. Nov 14, 5pm.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Libor Pešek conducts Schumann's *Piano Concerto*, with Ivan Moravec, Beethoven's *Symphony No 5*, Nov 16; Shostakovich's *Violin Concerto No 1*, with Arve Tellefsen, Mahler's *Symphony No 1*, Nov 20; 7.30pm.

Sviatoslav Richter, piano. Works to be announced. Nov 21, 3pm.

Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra. Leonard Slatkin conducts Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, the first UK performance of William Bolcom's *Flute Concerto*, with James Galway, Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*. Nov 21, 7.30pm.

Philharmonia Orchestra. Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts Schubert's



Colin Davis conducts Berlioz. Portraits at the NPG. Hinduism examined at the British Museum. Renaissance Florence at the Accademia Italiana.

Symphony No 5. Mozart's *Exsultate Jubilate*, & arias by Rossini, with Cecilia Bartoli, mezzo-soprano. Nov 23, 7.30pm.

London Philharmonic. Wolfgang Sawallisch conducts Shostakovich's Cello Concerto, with Lynn Harrell, & Beethoven's Symphony No 3 (Eroica). Nov 24, 7.30pm.

Alfred Brendel, piano. Beethoven Sonatas Op 2 Nos 1, 2, 3, Op 57 (Appassionata). Nov 29, 7.30pm.

Boston Symphony Orchestra, Brighton Festival Chorus. Seiji Ozawa conducts Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* & its sequel, the monodrama *Lélio*. Dec 4, 7.30pm.

Philharmonia Orchestra. Yevgeny Svetlanov conducts Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 2, with Peter Donohoe, Tchaikovsky's Symphony No 6 (Pathétique), Dec 9; 7.30pm. Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No 3, with Vladimir Ovchinnikov, Tchaikovsky's Symphony No 4, Dec 13; 7.30pm.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL
South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-928 8800).

Riccardo Castro, piano, winner of the 1993 Leeds International Competition, plays Mozart, Schubert, Debussy, Chopin. Nov 7, 3pm.

Tchaikovsky's The Christmas Slippers. Concert performance by Chelsea Opera Group of the opera based on Gogol's story *Christmas Eve*. Nov 7, 7.15pm.

The Purcell Experience. Two days of talks, rehearsals & performances, under the artistic direction of Roger Norrington, exploring Purcell's music & times, culminating in a performance of the semi-opera *The Fairy Queen*. Nov 20, 21.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Ernest Read Symphony Orchestra, Aeolian Singers & choirs, perform Prokofiev, Dukas, Handel, & carols for choir & audience. Dec 6, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

Messiah. Jane Glover conducts the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra & Huddersfield Choral Society. Dec 8, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus. Andrew Davis conducts Elgar, Holst, & Vaughan Williams's Fantasia on Christmas Carols. Dec 10, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

London Concert Orchestra, with choirs. Bach, Adam, Franck, Handel, Gounod, Berlioz, & carols for choir & audience. Dec 12, 3pm. *Festival Hall*.

Messiah. Richard Hickox conducts City of London Sinfonia & Singers. Dec 14, 7.30pm. *Barbican Hall*.

Joy to the World. English Philharmonia Orchestra, London Oriana Choir, National Youth Ballet. Dec 16, 7.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

LSO Christmas Concerts. Richard Hickox conducts popular classics & carols. Dec 16-18, 7.15pm. *Barbican Hall*.

James Galway's Christmas Collection, with the RPO & choir. Dec 18, 3pm & 7.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

Hospitals' Christmas Carol Concert. Charles Farncombe conducts massed choirs & fanfare trumpeters in carols & Christmas music. Dec 18, 3pm & 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

Wigmore Christmas Concert. Philharmonia Orchestra, Choristers of Westminster Cathedral. Britten, Copland, Puccini, Haydn, Schubert, Wolf, Rachmaninov, Duparc. Dec 18, 7.30pm. *Wigmore Hall*.

Bach Choir. David Willcocks conducts family carols. Dec 19, 3pm & 6.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

Parlour Quartet, in period costume, presents seasonal Victorian songs. Dec 19, 8pm. *Purcell Room*.

London Concert Orchestra, Thomas Tallis Choir. Franck, Bach, Handel, Gounod, Berlioz, & carols for choir & audience. Dec 19, 3pm; Dec 23, 7.30pm. *Barbican Hall*.

Messiah. Nicholas Kraemer conducts the London Bach Orchestra. Dec 20, 7.45pm. *Queen Elizabeth Hall*.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Popular classics & carols for audience. Dec 20, 22, 7.30pm. *Barbican Hall*.

Royal Choral Society, London Concert Orchestra. Carols. Dec 21, 7.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

EXHIBITIONS

The Museum of London will examine the backgrounds of the capital's inhabitants in **The Peopling of London**, as the British Museum presents a survey of Hindu deities. Both the Science Museum & the National Portrait Gallery open new galleries, on Nov 16 & 19 respectively. There is still time to catch the Royal Academy's American art show & the Freud retrospective at the Whitechapel.

ACCADEMIA ITALIANA
24 Rutland Gate, SW7 (071-225 3474).

Renaissance Florence: the age of Lorenzo de' Medici (1449-92). Paintings by Botticelli, Pollaiuolo & Fra Angelico, alongside jewellery, manuscripts & objects. Until Jan 23. Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm, Wed until 8pm, Sun noon-5.30pm. £5, OAPs £2.50, children £1. (Advance booking on 071-240 7200.)

BARBICAN ART GALLERY
Barbican Centre, EC2 (071-638 4141).

Alphonse Mucha. Theatre & commercial posters, & the Moravian artist's jewellery, sculpture & architectural designs. Until Dec 12.

Bill Brandt: Photographs 1928-83. A major retrospective for the British photographer. Until Dec 12. Mon-Sat 10am-6.45pm, Tues until 5.45pm, Sun noon-6.45pm. £4.50, concessions, & everybody Mon-Fri after 5pm, £2.50 (admits to both). Concourse gallery.

London Group. An 80th anniversary exhibition of works by Wyndham Lewis, Sickert, Bomberg, Pasmore & others. Dec 9-Jan 7. Mon-Sat 10am-7.30pm, Sun noon 7.30pm.

BETHNAL GREEN MUSEUM OF CHILDHOOD
Cambridge Heath Rd, E2 (081-980 3204).

Dickens's Christmas World. Quaint customs, from puddings to parlour games, described in *A Christ-*

mas Carol. Dec 1-Jan 16. Sat-Thurs 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2.30-5.50pm.

BRITISH MUSEUM
Great Russell St, WC1 (071-636 1555).

Deities & Devotion: the arts of Hinduism. Sculptures, paintings & textiles connected with one of the world's major religions. Nov 5-Apr 10. £2, concessions £1, children free. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.30-6pm.

CONTEMPORARY APPLIED ARTS
43 Earlham St, WC2 (071-836 6993).

Christmas Show 1993. New work by more than 200 makers includes decanters, jewellery, mirror frames & tapestries. Nov 12-Dec 24. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Thurs until 7pm.

CORK STREET GALLERIES
Cork St, W1 (information 071-381 1324).

Cork Street Open Weekend. Second year for this major event in the contemporary art world involves 17 galleries presenting modern pieces from aboriginal art to that of Hockney & Lichtenstein. Nov 27, 28. Sat 10am-7pm, Sun 11am-6pm.

HAYWARD GALLERY
South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-261 0127).

Julian Opie. Installations, sculptures & paintings recalling airport lounges, shopping malls & the open road. Nov 4-Feb 6.

Roger Hilton. Abstract paintings, small gouaches & 48 drawings by the British artist who died in 1975. Nov 4-Feb 6.

Daily 10am-6pm, Tues, Wed until 8pm. £5, concessions £3.50 (admits to both).

LEIGHTON HOUSE
12 Holland Park Rd, W14 (071-602 3316).

Animal, Myth & Magic. Sculpture by Mo Farquharson on themes varying from rush hour on London Bridge to the Labours of Hercules. Nov 15-27. Mon-Sat 11am-5.30pm. MUSEUM OF LONDON
London Wall, EC2 (071-600 3699).

The Peopling of London. The capital's multicultural history resulting from 15,000 years of settlement from overseas. Nov 16-May 15. Tues-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun noon-6pm. £3,



Giles anniversary at the National Museum of Cartoon Art. The All-Blacks rugby team tours Britain. Sotheby's sells Thornton's Temple of Flora.

concessions £1.50 (valid for three months); free daily after 4.30pm.

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE.

South Bank, SE1 (071-815 1350).

The Western: west of the Mississippi, north of the Rio Grande.

The rise to stardom of the cowboy & the Hollywood Indian illustrated with screenings, demonstrations & artifacts. Until spring, 1994. Daily 10am-6pm. £5.50, students £4.70, concessions £4.

NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (071-839 3321).

Sainsbury Wing:

Making & Meaning: The Wilton Diptych. An examination of the 14th-century painting of King Richard II being presented to the Virgin & Child, accompanied by medieval manuscripts, stained glass & jewels. Until Dec 12. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF CARTOON ART

183 Eversholt St, NW1 (071-388 4326).

Giles. Fifty years of original drawings from Carl Giles, Fleet Street cartoonist. Oct 6-Dec 23. Mon-Fri noon-6pm, Thurs until 7pm, Sat, Sun 2-6pm. Suggested contribution, £2.50, concessions £1.25.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

St Martin's Pl, WC2 (071-306 0055).

Thomas Eakins, 1844-1916. The work of this renowned American portraitist. Until Jan 23. Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm. £3.50, concessions £2.50.

The Portrait Now. Examples by Freud, Hockney, Auerbach, Paik, Baselitz & others. Nov 19-Feb 6. £3.50, concessions £2.50.

Late 20th-century Portraits/Heinz Archive & Library. New galleries open Nov 19.

Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

Piccadilly, W1 (071-439 7438).

American Art in the 20th Century. Painting & sculpture 1913-93. Until Dec 12. £6, concessions £4. (Advance booking on 071-240 7200 or 071-344 4444.)

Drawings from the J. Paul Getty Museum. Masterpieces by Mantegna, Leonardo, Raphael, Goya, Dürer, Rembrandt, Rubens & many others. Until Jan 23. £4, concessions £3, children £2.

Daily 10am-6pm.

SCIENCE MUSEUM

Exhibition Rd, SW7 (071-938 8080).

Science in the 18th Century: the George III collection. New gallery featuring scientific instruments from the collection of a monarch who was passionate about technological progress. Opens Nov 16. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 11am-6pm. £4, concessions £2.10.

SPINK

5-7 King St, SW1 (071-930 7888).

John Nash (1893-1977). Landscapes, botanical drawings & comic scenes. Until Nov 26. Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm, Tues until 7.30pm.

LAIE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (071-887 8008).

Ben Nicholson. Retrospective for the British abstractionist. Until Jan 9. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2-5.50pm. £4, concessions £2.50.

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (071-938 8349).

Gates of Mystery: the art of holy Russia. Examples of Russian medieval art, including icons, liturgical vessels, carvings & textiles. Until Jan 3. £3.75, concessions £2.50 (includes museum admission).

The 150th anniversary of the first Christmas card. Festive greetings, from Sir Henry Cole's invention in 1843 to the environment-friendly & humorous versions of the present day. Nov 17-Jan 9.

Mon noon-5.50pm, Tues-Sun 10am-5.50pm. Voluntary donation, suggested £3.50, concessions £1.

WHITECHAPEL ART GALLERY

Whitechapel High St, E1 (071-377 0107).

Lucian Freud. More than 50 paintings from the last 10 years' output of this British figurative artist. Until Nov 21. Tues-Sun 11am-5pm, Wed until 8pm. £3.50, concessions £1.75.

SPORT

New Zealand's rugby union team meets Scotland, England & the Barbarians. British rally driver Colin McRae will be pursuing reigning world champion Carlos Sainz of Spain in the annual RAC Rally. Tennis players Jo Durie & Clare Wood lead the British team defending its title in the 1993 European Women's Team Championship at Sheffield.

HORSE RACING

Mackeson Gold Cup. Nov 13. Cheltenham, Glos.

Hennessy Gold Cup. Nov 27. Newbury, Berks.

Triple Print Gold Cup. Dec 11. Cheltenham.

MOTOR SPORT

Network Q RAC Rally. Nov 21-24. Starts & finishes Birmingham.

POLO

Hurlingham Polo Association Arena International: England v America. Dec 12. Winkfield, Berks.

RUGBY UNION

Ireland v Romania. Nov 13. Dublin.

Scotland v New Zealand. Nov 20.

Murrayfield, Edinburgh.

England v New Zealand. Nov 27. Twickenham, Middx.

Barbarians v New Zealand. Dec 4. Cardiff.

Oxford University v Cambridge University. Dec 7. Twickenham.

SWIMMING

National Synchronised Swimming Championships. Nov 6,7. Crawley,

W Sussex.

European Sprint Championships. Nov 13,14. Gateshead, Tyne & Wear.

National Winter Championships. Dec 9-12. Gloucester.

TENNIS

Volkswagen National Championships (British men & women). Until Nov 7. Telford, Salop.

European Women's Team Champions. Nov 24-28. Sheffield.

OTHER EVENTS

The colourful floats in the Lord Mayor's Show brighten the City's grey, autumn streets. The International Art & Antiques Fair at Harrods is a new date in the collector's calendar. Carol-singing starts around the lofty Trafalgar Square Christmas tree & puddings are borne round Covent Garden Piazza in aid of cancer research.

Benson & Hedges RAC London to Brighton Veteran Car Run.

Dozens of pre-1905 vehicles in the annual celebration of Emancipation Day (when motorists could dispense with the man carrying a red flag). Nov 7. Starts 7.30am Hyde Park Corner, SW1; finishes from 10.30am Madeira Drive, Brighton, E Sussex.

Cancer Research Campaign Christmas Pudding Race. Costumed competitors must negotiate a series of obstacles without dropping their puddings. Dec 11, 10.30am. The Piazza, Covent Garden, WC2.

Christmas Tree. The white lights are switched on to decorate Oslo's annual gift to London, Dec 9. Carols sung daily 3-10pm until Dec 24. Trafalgar Sq, WC2.

International Art & Antiques Fair. More than 76 dealers make use of this new event to show off pictures, furniture, ceramics, jewellery & antiquities. Nov 12-17. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm (Wed, Fri until 7pm), Sun noon-6pm. Harrods, Knightsbridge, SW1. £10, two people £18.

Lord Mayor's Show. The City's most dazzling spectacle. Nov 13. Starts 11am, Guildhall, EC2; procession passes via Fleet St to the Law Courts, then returns via Queen Victoria Street to Mansion House, EC4 at 2.30pm.

Sale of Atlases, Natural History & Travel Books. Items include a copy of Thornton's *The Temple of Flora*, estimated at £45,000. Dec 7, 10.30am & 2.30pm. Sotheby's, 34/35 New Bond St, W1 (071-493 8080).

QUIZ ANSWERS

A

- 1 kestrel, h
- 2 swallow, g
- 3 wren, c
- 4 oyster-catcher, e
- 5 sparrow-hawk, f
- 6 redstart, a
- 7 yellowhammer, b
- 8 red grouse, d

B

- 1 Sir Winston Churchill
- 2 Ronald Reagan
- 3 Dame Edith Sitwell
- 4 The Princess of Wales
- 5 Florence Griffith Joyner
- 6 Dickie Bird
- 7 Zubin Mehta
- 8 Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat
- 9 Gabriela Sabatini
- 10 King Henry VIII
- 11 Julian Clary
- 12 Michelangelo's *David*
- 13 Queen Elizabeth I
- 14 Dame Elisabeth Frink
- 15 The couple depicted in Jan van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Marriage*
- 16 Queen Mary (then Duchess of York)

C

- 1 beloved of Jehovah
- 2 prudent, temperate
- 3 pearl
- 4 gift of God
- 5 high mountain
- 6 bee
- 7 conquering
- 8 father of peace

D

- 1 United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
- 2 light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation
- 3 Mobile Army Surgical Hospital
- 4 advanced gas-cooled reactor
- 5 Freedom Organisation for the Right to Enjoy Smoking Tobacco
- 6 Senatus Populusque Romanus (Senate and People of Rome)
- 7 personal equity plan; Political and Economic Planning
- 8 electronic random number indicator equipment

E

- 1 Bay of Pigs invasion, 1961
- 2 Six-Day War, 1967
- 3 My Lai massacre, March, 1968
- 4 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, August, 1968
- 5 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, 1974
- 6 Ugandan civil war, 1978-79
- 7 Iranian Islamic revolution, 1979
- 8 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, 1990

F

- 1 Liechtenstein
- 2 Netherlands
- 3 Yemen PDR
- 4 Bahrain
- 5 Peru
- 6 Turkey
- 7 Nigeria
- 8 Argentina

G

- 1 generosity
- 2 mirth
- 3 animosity
- 4 grief
- 5 peace
- 6 love
- 7 boldness
- 8 thinking of you

H

- 1 Jethro Tull
- 2 Denis Papin
- 3 Suez Canal
- 4 Robert Peary and Matthew Henson
- 5 Davidson Black
- 6 coal-gas lighting
- 7 the torpedo
- 8 the first thermonuclear device, the H-bomb, was exploded

I

- 1 Patna
- 2 Chandigarh
- 3 Gandhinagar
- 4 Bhopal
- 5 Calcutta
- 6 Jaipur
- 7 Bombay
- 8 Madras

J

- 1 Gore Vidal
- 2 Muriel Spark
- 3 Albert Camus
- 4 Saul Bellow
- 5 Norman Mailer
- 6 Iris Murdoch
- 7 Aldous Huxley
- 8 Wilkie Collins

K

- 1 *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, by Oscar Wilde
- 2 *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, by Dylan Thomas
- 3 *Moll Flanders*, by Daniel Defoe
- 4 *To Lucasta, Going to the Wars*, by Richard Lovelace
- 5 *The Ministry of Fear*, by Graham Greene
- 6 *The Return of the Native*, by Thomas Hardy
- 7 *King John*, by William Shakespeare

L

- 1 *The Bride of Lammormoor*, by Sir Walter Scott
- 2 *Kabale und Liebe*, by Friedrich von Schiller
- 3 *The Girl of the Golden West*, by David Belasco
- 4 *Le Rosier de Madame Husson*, by Guy de Maupassant
- 5 *Erdegeist & Die Büchse der Pandora*, by Frank Wedekind
- 6 Verses from Canto XXX of Dante's *Inferno*
- 7 *Scènes de la vie de Bohème*, by Henri Murger
- 8 *Le Roi s'amuse*, by Victor Hugo
- 9 Verses by Rudolf Tešňohlídek to accompany cartoon drawings published in a Brno newspaper

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George Adamson with the lioness Elsa, then aged two, left, from *The Great Safari*, the revealing story of the lives of George and Joy Adamson, creators of the *Born Free* legend, written by Adrian House and published by Harvill (£20). Right, the king's mistress, Nell Gwynn, as Diana in a painting by Simon Verelst and now reproduced in *Charles II: His Life and Times* by Antonia Fraser (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25).



BOOK CHOICE

Short notes on some selected books for Christmas reading

HARDBACK NON-FICTION

Taken on Trust

by Terry Waite

Hodder & Stoughton, £14.99

During his 1,763 days in captivity Terry Waite kept his sanity by composing his autobiography in his head. This book is the result, and the life it describes is one of well-meaning but often misguided innocence, fuelled into frenetic activity by a desire to please. The book's constant jumping between grim actuality and disconnected memory is often confusing and at times aggravating, but the passages describing the hardships suffered as a hostage are deeply moving.

Rider Haggard and the Lost Empire

by Tom Pocock

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20

Best known as the author of exotic adventure stories, Sir Rider Haggard regarded writing as no more than a lucrative hobby. He was a Norfolk squire with a passionate interest in agriculture, but he preferred to see himself as a visionary dedicated to developing the British Empire into an ideal global nation. He failed to achieve this weighty ambition, but his imaginative attempts add spirit to this lively biography.

The Letters of Nancy Mitford

edited by Charlotte Mosley

Hodder & Stoughton, £20

Nancy Mitford wrote letters in the same way that she spoke: wittily and impulsively. She once asked Evelyn Waugh if there was in London a teacher of punctuation, but she seems not to have found him, for which we should all be truly grateful.

Encyclopaedia of Britain

by Bamber Gascoigne

Macmillan, £29.95

The author has used current popular fame as the ultimate criterion for inclusion in his encyclopedia. Some of the 6,000 entries seem idiosyncratic and transient, but the whole is as entertaining as it is informative.

HARDBACK FICTION

The Green Knight

by Iris Murdoch

Chatto & Windus, £15.99

The medieval legend of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight provides Iris Murdoch with the inspiration for her new novel, a complex story set in contemporary London. It begins with a death (murder, or self-defence?), and follows its consequences on a number of levels ranging between realism and fantasy. Typically rich in detail about unexpected and mundane happenings, and full of humour as well as suspense, *The Green Knight* will rank high among Iris Murdoch's 24 novels.

The Blue Afternoon

by William Boyd

Sinclair-Stevenson, £14.99

The female narrator of William Boyd's new novel is an architect beset by problems: she has had to battle with a dishonest partner and a broken marriage, her only child died in infancy, her latest building is being destroyed. A stranger enters her life, claiming to be her father, and with considerable reluctance she is persuaded to join his search for his past and, perhaps, her own. From this tangled web emerges suddenly a powerful and gripping narrative and a novel of real originality.

Mr Barrett's Secret and Other Stories

by Kingsley Amis

Hutchinson, £14.99

The short story may not be Kingsley Amis's most effective medium, but his talent to entertain remains undiminished. The title-story is narrated by Mr Barrett of Wimpole Street and explains his opposition to his daughter's relationship with Robert Browning by his fear that both poet and the Barretts have Creole blood in their veins, which might result in black offspring. It is an intriguing idea, but as a story the impact evaporates when the supporting evidence has to be supplied in the form of an author's commentary.

PAPERBACK NON-FICTION

Ottoline Morrell

by Miranda Seymour

Sceptre, £8.99

Subtitled "Life on the Grand Scale", this is an absorbing biography of a courageous woman who lived life to the full. Mistress of Bertrand Russell, Henry Lamb and Roger Fry, her main role seems to have been to entertain and inspire these and other artists and writers by maintaining the equivalent of a French salon. She emerges as a far more sincere and sympathetic person than many of those who benefited from her kindness were prepared to concede.

Beaverbrook

by Anne Chisholm & Michael Davie

Pimlico, £12.50

Lord Beaverbrook was a self-made man who rode his luck and who, from the age of 30, was never short of a million or more. In England he used his money to buy political influence, which he exercised by his close relationship with Bonar Law and later by his newspapers. Generous and mean, of huge vitality and recurring hypochondria, sometimes heroic, often monstrous and always promiscuous, Beaverbrook was in contact with virtually everyone of note between 1910 and 1964. His life was full, and his biographers have made the most of it.

Churchill: The End of Glory

by John Charmley

Sceptre, £14.99

John Charmley presents the revisionist view of Churchill's life, detailing all the faults and mistakes and concluding with the argument that by prolonging the war when there was an opportunity of making peace the great man in effect unwittingly brought about the decline of Britain as a world power. The argument is well presented but fails to convince, for it assumes that Hitler could have been relied upon to honour any treaty he signed.

PAPERBACK FICTION

Bodily Harm

by Rachel Billington

Pan, £5.99

A compelling story told by two people. The first, Lydia, is a young woman who, fresh from a Turkish bath, goes into a shop in search of kitchen equipment. There she is violently attacked by a young man, Pat, the second narrator, who leaves her for dead. In fact Lydia survives. Both have to find ways of coping with the sudden incident that changed their lives, and it is this slow recovery that is the theme.

Now You Know

by Michael Frayn

Penguin, £5.99

Terry is a bit of a wide boy who gets away with it in spite of his age (he is over 60) because of his success in running a campaign for open government. This endears him to the media, for whom he is adept at staging events and producing soundbites. The plot in this clever novel seems less important than the interplay of the characters.

Doctor Criminale

by Malcolm Bradbury

Penguin, £5.99

Set in the autumn of 1990, just after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, Malcolm Bradbury's first novel in a decade follows the trail of an eastern European philosopher, Dr Bazlo Criminale, who is being sought by a punk pundit commissioned to do a television feature about him. The story provides the author with much opportunity for satire, but there is a serious history lesson beneath the froth.

The Pioneers

by James Fenimore Cooper

Everyman, £5.99

First published in 1823, this evocative study of the American frontier is back in print again, along with other American and English classics, thanks to the splendid initiative of Everyman Paperbacks, which is doing for a new generation what the original Everyman did for their grandparents.



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